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MAJOR J.L. BRIND



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BATTLE SCHOOL

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BATTLE SCHOOL

This book describes the evolution of battle drill training in its early stages. It was written in October, 1941, and many revisions made since that date are not included in the text.

INTRODUCTION.
THE BRAINPOWER OF HITLER'S ARMY.
(An American Opinion).

By Frederic Sondern, Jr.

[Stationed in Berlin as Central European Correspondent of the McClure Newspaper Syndicate from 1932 to 1937, Mr. Sondern watched the development of the new German Army during the period of its hardest training. He attended manoeuvres regularly, talked often with officers and men, and saw at first hand what the Germans were doing.]

Military Experts have found one common denominator to all the spectacular Nazi triumphs. It is the **perfect co-ordination** of all branches of the war machine. Beginning with the invasion of Poland, through the Battle of France, and the recent campaign in the Eastern Mediterranean, German Air power, Infantry, Artillery, Engineers, Mechanized Columns and the Navy when necessary, have clicked with clockwork precision. For along with new machines of war, the Nazi High Command has developed a **new kind of soldier** to make them work.

Early in 1938 General Halder—chief of the German General Staff—went to Hitler with a revolutionary request. He asked that 30 of his best officers be transferred to the Navy for two years, to study Naval tactics at first-hand. High Naval and Military officers objected violently. But Hitler was impressed with the idea. The officers served on submarines, destroyers, and battleships. They commanded "Landing Parties" of marines, they organized "Convoys." They learned what a Navy can do and how to do it.

These 30 men, now key generals of the German Army, had previously been sent through most branches of the field forces. In 1935, they had been moved in a body to the Air Corps. They were taught to fly everything from Stukas to the big Junkers' transport ships. They studied bombing, tried the landing of Air Infantry, and the provisioning of ground columns from the air—until they were at home in every phase of aerial strategy. They are now nicknamed the "Three Dimensionalists," for they have a general knowledge of the entire military and naval apparatus which gives each of them an ability to command equalled by few other officers in the world.

The results of Halder's training in co-ordinating Air and Ground forces were first apparent in Poland. Whenever a column of infantry or a mechanized force was halted by a strong Polish position, the dive-bombers, summoned by radio, were there within a few minutes, to blast a path through enemy pill-boxes, trenches and anti-tank guns. In Norway, the co-operation of the Navy was added.

In the Battle of France, the greatest feats of co-ordination were achieved. Tanks, Dive-bombers, Engineers with pre-fabricated bridges, Infantry, highly mobile heavy Artillery, and their Supply trains moved and countermoved with such precision that General Sir Edmond Ironside remarked, "They seem to be directed by a single brain. But that's impossible."

It was not impossible. Nearly a hundred German Staff Officers managed to articulate the operation, but General Von Reichenau ran them all. All through that fatal period there was continuous wrangling among Allied officers. Generals Ironside and Weygand had to wait precious hours while their quarrelling plane, tank and infantry experts settled elementary questions of what kind of weapons to use and where. But General Von Reichenau, who knew not only his infantry and artillery, but his tanks and Stukas as well, by personal experience, had the entire German advance at his finger-tips and was always ready to make split-second decisions.

When a section of the Allied line in Belgium **weakened under an infantry assault**, he was able **immediately** to throw the whole weight of his mechanised and aerial reserves against that soft spot. They broke through, cut the French Supply lines, and surrounded the advancing British Army, which had to retreat disastrously to the shambles at Dunkirk. The same thing happened at Sedan, and the Battle of France was over; won not by mass, but by co-ordination of command and perfect timing.

To absorb such an education as Halder prescribed, **a General Staff Officer must be a man of Exceptional Qualifications**. But the German system of promotion provides that only men of unusual calibre get to positions of important command; which is not so in any other Army, and certainly not in our Army. Ability alone is the criterion of advancement; seniority in service is of secondary importance, and political influence of none at all.

From the moment that a young German enters the armed forces, he is watched and studied by **special personnel officers**

picked for their knack of recognizing officer material. I had an experience with one of them some years ago at a training camp near Potsdam. At one end of a field was a platoon of riflemen. Each man had to cross the field, taking advantage of every bit of natural cover—rocks, trees, ditches. The officer made a mark against the "drill record" of every man who exposed himself too long to an "enemy" sharpshooter. The man who received the least marks was rewarded with extra leave.

The officer pointed out one man. "Watch him," he said. "He has a brain, and he's using it. See how precise his rushes are." After the exercise was over, Private Schmidt was summoned. The officer asked his questions. "How did he like his gun? Did he think camouflaged uniforms would help soldiers crossing a field under these conditions? Schmidt's answers made sense. The next day he was a Corporal.

Schmidt was given a small squad to teach. His men learned to cross that field and throw grenades at an imaginary machine-gun nest much faster than the squads of his fellow corporals. And, in a few more weeks, Schmidt was a Sergeant. Two months later, he was sent to a military academy to study for a commission. A year later he was a Lieutenant. That was in 1938. The last I heard of him, almost a year ago, he had just become a Major at the age of 30, and received the Iron Cross, First class, for particularly able leadership of his men under fire. Schmidt's case is not unusual. **He was not a very earnest Nazi, he had no influential friends, but he did have military ability.**

Another time, for one whole day, I watched umpires passing judgement as one captain after another led his company against a group of farm buildings in which two machine guns and a considerable enemy force were supposedly hidden. The precision and speed (Battle Drill) with which the captain brought his men into position, his choice of method, his control over the company decided whether he was to go up a grade or not. The next day I saw Engineer officers being tested on their approach against fortifications. One of the latter steered his column into an area where even I, a layman, knew he would have been blasted into dust. I saw the umpire's entry on his drill card—"Unfit for Command."

Three years before the war broke out I saw Regimental Commanders being picked for the mechanised force of the Munich Command. **In a confusion that was as close to real**

war as could be made, the candidates had to run off a "break through" which was an exact rehearsal of what happened three years later in Flanders. The air was black with planes, and woe to any officer who left his tanks, or trucks standing in the open without camouflage. A bomber could rake road or field with small sacks of flour mixed with coloured glue which left ineradicable marks on the vehicles they had hit. And a mark would go down on the drill card of the commander whose men had been negligent. There were 15 men up for colonelcies; 8 made it.

One of the judges indiscreetly told me later; "if a man cannot recognise the absolute necessity of co-operation between the air and ground forces, he's out as far as we're concerned."

I suggested that Army tradition would make it difficult for an officer of one branch to ask urgently for help from another. He answered; "Probably the greatest achievement of this Army is that we have forgotten that we are infantry men, or artillerymen, or engineers, or airmen. **We are a team, you, an American, should understand the advantages of that.**" I understood. But when I tried to pass on the information to responsible quarters, I was told that the idea was preposterous.

Long before an officer has reached colonelcy, his drill cards, efficiency record, and special knowledge record told the **Personnel Bureau** of the War Ministry whether he has qualifications that might be useful to the General Staff. There is no such waste of human material as in our Army, where a man with the most detailed knowledge of France or Germany may remain indefinitely a Corporal in an obscure army post. In Germany such a man is examined, and if found competent, he is immediately transferred to that post in which he may be of greatest use.

Every year, the War Ministry gives all officers a chance to write "prize theses" on a number of military subjects. They are graded by General Staff Officers in the High Command, picked for their open-mindedness. Some ideas have come out of these essays that any other Brass Hats would have thrown into the waste basket—such as the landing of troops by gliders, which was still being derided in America as a visionary scheme, when the Germans were preparing to do it successfully in Crete.

When an officer writes an unusual "study," the Personnel

Division gets out his record. He may be a specialist suited to the development of anti-aircraft artillery—or he may be a potential Three-Dimensional Commander. If the latter, he is started on Halder's curriculum; first through the branches of the Army that he does not know, then into the Luftwaffe, and finally into the Navy, before he becomes a General, possibly at the age of 45.

The training of men who do not qualify for advancement is specialised, until each is letter perfect in his particular function. The combat engineers who attacked the Belgium fortresses of Eben Emael—key to the defences of the Albert Canal—had rehearsed that assault for months on a replica of the fort built in East Prussia (A Battle Drill). Day after day, the Stukas laid down a "barrage," while the Engineers advanced under cover of smoke to set T.N.T. charges with long poles in the embrasures, and place flame throwers in position. When the actual attack was executed, the Germans moved with a precision that seemed "like second nature." It was.

In 1939, I saw German soldiers practising with tanks in the Black Forest. That was in preparation for the advance through the Ardennes, which the French General Staff considered impossible. The mechanised columns in that drill had been at it for hours at a time, day after day.

The men used to come back completely exhausted. "Have you ever been in a tank for six hours?" one of them asked me. I said I never had. "Well, don't ever!" was his answer and five minutes later he was sound asleep. I saw him some months later, and he was able to take six hours in a tank in his stride.

Not a moment of the German soldier's day is wasted. Clerical labour, kitchen police, manual work around the post are all done by a civilian military corps of men unfit for combat duty. **Every day the German soldier goes through "standard practice."** A hand grenade is thrown at him, which he must pick up and throw back as quickly as possible. He must advance through a wood and fire from the hip at a target which is suddenly raised in his path. He must be able to throw himself into a shell hole without breaking a leg. He must practice getting through an entanglement without letting his helmet clank against the barbed wire. **"The casualties in the last war, through ignorance," a German Staff Officer once told me, "were much too high."**

We shall cut them down by seventy-five per cent this time."
The figures of the Battle of France seemed to confirm that.

The German shock troops which beat back Wavell's advance in North Africa were first trained for two months in Libya under actual desert conditions. Before leaving Germany, each man was given sun-lamp treatments to acclimate his skin to the African sun.

These examples of efficiency should be a grim warning for our War Department. Possible operations against German held bases in West Africa, against German-dominated sections of Latin America where Nazi troops may be landed by the huge transport planes now rolling off the production lines in the Reich, will be successful only with the **closest co-operation and training of all of our forces**. The bombing planes which destroy enemy air bases and cover the landing of our troops, the naval vessels which convoy our transports, the dive-bombers and tanks, which break through what fortifications the Germans may have been able to build, all must be operated in unison by a supreme command that completely understands the function of each.

Many a ranking officer in the War and Navy Departments still can't forget that he is a "cavalryman," or "infantryman," or "battle-shipman," still thinks in terms of his own branch, as though War were a rivalry between services instead of a **closely integrated effort of all**. It is still impossible for our armoured corps to get sufficient airplane support to practice the necessary co-ordination of tanks and dive-bombers. Despite the fact that the Army Air Corps has finally been given a place on the General Staff equal to the other military arms, it is still frowned on by many of the Brass Hats and will probably be relegated to a minor role in the forthcoming summer manoeuvres. The War Department now has the pick of our young men to make into officers. Since our youth is more intelligent than the Nazis, we could improve vastly on the German system. If we fail to do that, we may have to pay a terrible price in blood, sweat and tears.

WHAT THE COLONEL WROTE.

Private and Confidential.

My dear General,

I am seriously disturbed about what I may call, for want of a better description, the psychological welfare of my troops, so I am presuming upon an acquaintance that goes right back to Prep School days to write to you frankly, freely and personally.

As you know, we were formerly a Pioneer battalion, and we were converted into Infantry proper, not so very many months ago. In the bad old days we were nobody's darlings, and we got every kind of nasty job from building huts to digging drains. We expected those jobs, and we got them.

There was a tremendous party when we were converted into real soldiers. Everybody got drunk, including your humble servant. We were to be part of the field force, and part of a division which had already acquired quite a fine reputation.

But what was to happen to us? A few days after joining up, we were pushed off on exercises and carted around in buses for quite a time. And a very nice ride it was. We looked very decorative and grand, but we felt most bogus, I can tell you.

And on and off that sort of exercise—charabanc rides from nowhere to nowhere to do nothing—still descend upon us frequently. It is nobody's fault apparently. In the intervals we get on with our training whenever we can.

Whenever we can is just about right. If there is a Harvest to be gathered in—we must gather it. Snow to be cleared—we must clear it. Post to be sorted—we must sort it. A bombed building to be cleared away—we must clear it. A defence post to be dug for the Home Guard—we must dig it. A fatigue party to be found—we must find it. Never a week goes by without one of these demands—and we still have our own fatigues to do as well.

We find to our amazement that we are still pioneers! But we are expected to be soldiers now in our spare time!! What a surprise!

Some of my officers try very hard to row against the current and to make some headway. But they very soon find that a special torment faces them. When they used to

teach rowing in their civilian days, they used to be given the same crew every day to coach, and the programme of training was a logical and orderly progression. But now, just to make it easy, they get a different team every day to coach. The Fatigue Rota, the Guard Rota, the Leave Rota, the Bath Rota, the Medical Rota, the Dental Rota, and Lord knows what other Rota—they all must come before training. They are the Adjutant's orders, you see, carried into effect by the R.S.M.

So Pte. Smith has done lessons 1 to 10; Pte Jones has done 2 and 3; Pte. Cohen hasn't done any lessons at all. Or has he? Shall we start at lesson 5, or go back to the beginning? No, that will "brown off" Cpl. Robinson, who is very keen. Oh, what the Hell?

Never mind, Captain Brown is a trier, and he isn't going to be defeated. He works like a man possessed and manages to achieve quite a bit. "A good day's training," he thinks, as he moves quickly back to the company office to deal with his not inconsiderable mail.

But what is this? Private Smith is accepted for the R.A.F.; Private Jones is going to the O.C.T.U.; Private Cohen is to report to-day for training as a fitter at 1400 hrs., please; Private Cooper is struck off strength from the "Y" List (he fell down and sprained his ankle badly, damn it, so alas, we shall never see him again!); Private Smith is to go to Radiolocation next week.; Private Wilkinson is a tradesman and is to go back to a factory. But what is this? Unkindest of all! Corporal Robinson—Corporal Robinson, who got that "D" at Hythe, and that "D" at Netheravon—veteran of twenty courses, on whom years of good training have been lavished, Corporal Robinson, who is that prize, rare, rarest of rare birds, a really well trained soldier, and a specialist, too, is to become a Corporal in the Military Police (Traffic Control). No arguments—War Office posting!

Is it any wonder that Captain Brown scatters his papers in the air and dashes for the mess and a much needed drink? There is no one there, so he opens up the newspaper for a quiet little read. Will he find a little real comfort in that soothing sheet? None indeed!

Must have more tanks, more planes. Tanks and planes will win the war, and guns. Why is the Secretary of State for War, so narrow-minded? Why doesn't he release 100,000 coal miners to go back to the mines where there is

work of real national importance to be done. And then, if miners can be released to get coal, why can't farmers get skilled men to move the crops? Surely the Army must be fully trained by now, after two years of war? Don't the Government realise that the way to victory is production? Need the Army cause so much damage to crops or use so much petrol or waste so much food? The Air Force is wonderful. The Navy is wonderful. The Australians are wonderful. The **Civilians are wonderful**. The Army is Bloody Awful!

Is there any wonder that Captain Brown is depressed? He was a lawyer in civil life, with a good practice. He could have claimed exemption from Army Service and got a good job in one of the Ministries at many times the salary he is earning now. He joined up full of life and vigour and enthusiasm, eager to help win the war. He felt quite a crusader.

Now Brown is NO automaton. He will never be a Robot soldier. He has a brain—a critical brain, with which he examines all his trials and tribulations very carefully. He is even insubordinate enough to subject the organization of which he is now a humble part to the blinding light of pure reason. He thinks of all the things he has done in the last two years and tries to find what he has achieved.

Quite suddenly he feels very cold right down inside. He wonders why he has never been allowed to put over some of the knowledge he acquired six months ago on that very good course at Command (Damn it—I think I've forgotten it all now). He asks himself—"Am I really helping to win this war? Or am I just a passenger—a dog's body?" "Is it true that any fool can be an infantryman? Is it? Is it true that the Air Force can win the war? He gropes around in his mind and cannot answer those questions. He feels despondent and "browned off." What's the use of battling against the tide—nobody cares. There is no policy, anyway. The Army is just a labour exchange.

I tell you, General, if something isn't done to apply common sense somewhere, these good men will rot—rot—rot. And if we aren't very careful, the whole damned Army'll get an inferiority complex, that nothing—NOTHING will ever shift.

What they need NOW is a new technique, a new outlook, a new purpose. They want to understand what their job is

in this war, and why they are vital to the war effort. They want to feel that they are an essential part of a carefully co-ordinated plan which leads to Victory. "Your Country Needs You!" That was a fine slogan! It could inspire anyone. Can't we recapture that spirit? I think we could if we really tried.

Yours sincerely,

J. J. JACKSON,

Lieut.-Colonel.

WHAT THE GENERAL WROTE.

THE TRAINING OF INFANTRY AND

THE DEVELOPMENT OF INFANTRY EQUIPMENT.

"Infantry is the Principal Arm. It Bears the Main Weight of Battle. It Suffers the Heaviest Casualties. All Other Arms Support It."

In these days it is significant that this rather old-fashioned view-point should still be stated, so bluntly in official German training manuals.

The advent of the petrol engine, the Tank, and the Dive Bomber has not resulted in a loss of sense of proportion.

As a result, Infantry, in the German Army, receives the care and attention it deserves; both as regards the detailed training, and as regards the planning and production of its divers articles of fighting equipment.

It is hardly a gross exaggeration to say that, ever since the big Artillery barrages of the last war, the British Infantry has been "off the map" and still is.

One of the most remarkable things about the last War was the failure to note and to study a very significant change in Infantry fighting technique adopted by the Germans in their final offensive in March, 1918. Call this technique by any tactical catch phrase you may fancy; but, in effect, it amounted to a return to faith in Infantry weapons, properly used, as a major factor in winning battles.

In spite of the spectacular development of their Luftwaffe, and their Panzer Divisions and the successes which these have achieved, the Germans have owed much to some first-class fighting by their Infantry at the right time and place.

In spite of all that has been said about Crete, there must have been some critical days when the issue hung on the Infantry fight. This aspect of the battle does not appear to have received careful study. If it has, the results have not been published.

It is obvious to all, after two years of war, that the German method is to disintegrate his enemy's Army by well known methods.

The most significant feature of his methods, is the breaking up of the **Big** battle into hundreds of **Little** battles.

At this stage the Infantry play an important part; a far more important part than is at present realised by us.

The whole conception of landing from the Air, lightly armed infantry soldiers in areas under control of the enemy, is a profession of their unbounded faith in the superiority of their Infantry; and in their ability to fight for a period at least, against heavy odds.

We would do well to understand how vital is the issue which depends upon the fighting skill of the Infantry at certain stages in every major battle.

At the close of the last war, our Infantry accepted with resignation the classification implied in the term the "P.B.I." It also accepted the assumption of even responsible officers that the Infantry was the legitimate dumping ground for the lowest forms of military life.

The dawn of a better understanding of Infantry came with the production of the War Establishment of the 1937 Inf. Bn., based on a modern layout of up-to-date Infantry weapons.

This understanding existed only in the best military minds, and did not penetrate deeply into the middle and lower ranks of the Infantry officers.

The reason for this was that the weapons and equipment for which the War Establishment was designed were not available at that time, in any quantity. Owing to the start of the war, almost before the New Infantry Bns. were properly equipped, the possibilities of the Carriers, the Mortars (both 2 inch and 3 inch), the Bren L.M.G. and the A. Tk. Rifle were not appreciated by the Infantry officers, many of

whom are now commanding Bns. or are senior regimental officers.

At this point, let us turn for a moment to the mass of British citizens now in military uniforms and filling the ranks of Infantry units both in the officer and other rank categories.

We are a democracy and proud of it. We are ready to die for the right to be unprepared for any war that we have no means of avoiding. We must therefore accept the disadvantages which such a faith imposes.

In the Infantry—more than in any other Arm—the main disadvantage is **wholesale ignorance of the realities of modern battle**. Consequently, there is universal failure to realize the standard of individual and collective skill that this war will ultimately demand from our Infantry.

From the above, it can be seen why our Infantry generally is incapable of translating into effective practice, on the ground, the excellent directives and pamphlets which they are constantly receiving.

In the Regular Army, in peace time, our Infantry had few men and insufficient modern Infantry equipment. Its officers were forced by circumstances into an atmosphere of theoretical classroom tactics, the best components of which naturally were marked for promotion.

It did not pay an officer to think hard and long about the development of every Infantry weapon and how it could be best used, both singly and collectively with other weapons in the hard boiled business of front-line fighting. Thus Infantry training and study became less practical and more theoretical, until the close study of the part to be played by the Sergeant, the Corporal and the Private (the majority by 40 to 1) was looked upon as "almost bad form."

"We must get on to higher training." So we must. But it is no good bringing our soldiers to the battle if we have not trained them how to fight it.

What is wanted in the Infantry is a return to faith and confidence in their own weapons based on practice, by all the small sub-units in the field in such a way that the men have confidence, that what they are doing is "the goods." It can be done, but it is very difficult, because of wholesale ignorance of realities and essentials.

The Germans have reduced this problem to its lowest common denominator. They say:—

"The basis of all Infantry tactics is the use of **FIRE**. It is the duty of all commanders to gain fire superiority—

by arranging for the necessary concentration of weapons and ammunition both as regards time and place."

"Infantry defeats the enemy by **FIRE and MOVEMENT**. The most important part of all Infantry Training from Individual Training to Regimental Training is training in the **employment of fire**."

It would be easy in the realm of theoretical tactical discussion, to hold the view that it is unsound to place such an unwarranted emphasis on the value of Infantry Fire power. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that the German theory **and practice** has paid them a good dividend.

Here we come to the root of the problem of the fighting efficiency of Infantry. Our Infantry is magnificently armed, but we do not realize our power if the weapons are used in the best manner, both as regards time and place.

We would do well to study more closely the use of fire by infantry, using all their infantry weapons in close co-operation, both as regards time and place. In this problem, the technical characteristics of each infantry weapon are paramount. Senior infantry officers do not know enough technical details of their infantry weapons to be able to employ them to the best tactical advantage, or to supervise adequately the use in technical-cum-tactical training upon which the successful use of FIRE depends.

Junior infantry officers are mostly beginners with all the infantry weapons, and it will be sometime before they are sufficiently masters of their weapons to impart the necessary leadership regarding their offensive use in battle.

Infantry is constantly being led up the garden path by some amazing pieces of "Ballyhoo." **They are repeatedly being told that their superior power of being able to think and act for themselves is more than a match for German automatism.**

If you were to take any 11 clerks out of the City of London, and ask them to play Chelsea in a first league football match, would you rely on their power to act and think for themselves to win the game?

The co-ordination of the fire of infantry weapons (team work) in forward fighting requires expert technical-cum-tactical knowledge on the part of unit and sub-unit commanders who give orders—and on the part of all the men, who throughout the battle use these weapons as opportunity affords. A good battalion fighting its way forward with its own weapons **should be** more like a highly trained symphony

orchestra rendering a classical piece of music—than a demonstration of the lowest form of military life in action.

Many senior and experienced officers—especially in arms outside the infantry—fail to appreciate the standard of skill required for successful infantry action.

They do not know how much patient, persistent and elementary spade work is necessary to produce within the sub-units a satisfactory state of essential, basic training for battle.

They do not understand the immense difficulties the Commanding Officer is up against.

Constant changes in personnel—the infantry is the unskilled labour exchange for the rest of the Army. Therefore it answers every call for temporary or permanent manpower to the Army, the Navy, the R.A.F., Civilian tradesmen—even the N.A.A.F.I.

Many formation commanders say they cannot understand the constant complaint of young officers that they hardly ever get sufficient facilities to train their sub-units.

The answer is: Go and stay with a battalion for a week, and study its daily life. The answer will be much clearer than any paper strength returns.

The Commanding Officer is up against it on every side. Any junior staff officer or departmental officer can call on the man-power of the infantry for unskilled labour and does so frequently by implying, if not actually obtaining, the authority of his commander.

Our system of peace-time administration, imposed on us, mainly by the auditors, keeps sub-unit commanders in their offices when they ought to be outside.

"Experts" in every conceivable side line of military activity descend upon them to point out regulations concerning their particular side line, which have not been attended to. Frequently they are called upon to report upon such failures.

Any morning they may wake up to find that the officer in charge of records has ordered away at a few hours' notice a substantial proportion of their best N.C.Os. or some key specialists.

The morning mail from Brigade H.Q. may bring an order to send off forthwith the only trained Carrier Platoon Commander to whom the Commandant of a School of Instruction has taken a fancy. The battalion commander quickly learns to adapt himself to the struggle for survival and it is understandable that the urgent need to prepare for the more

altruistic object of national survival at times fades into the background.

This picture of the battalion Commander's difficulties is largely unavoidable—but it calls for sympathetic understanding by all higher commanders.

Our object should be to concentrate on teaching and practising our infantry sub-units in the intricate and scientific business of **the team work of forward infantry fighting, and to teach the more senior infantry officers how to plan and direct this fighting.**

Some of our "Tactical Training" is, in theory, out of tune with the characteristics of the weapons now at our disposal.

WHAT THE GENERAL SAID.

The General paced his room thoughtfully, puffing angrily at his pipe.

"The infantry," he said to the young officer who had just been called in "is being rapidly reduced to the status of a Labour **Exchange**, for as soon as T. Atkins has about learnt one job, he is whisked away for another. Soon those who are left behind will feel like the last of the unemployables at the very end of the queue—unwanted—useless and hopeless. Yet, if only they knew it, they have a vital task to do and the most difficult job in the world to learn.

We must accept the system. Greater minds than ours decree that it is necessary, and I suppose I must bow to them, though I do so with reluctance and misgiving. But there is still this problem of those who remain—this ever changing chameleon, shifting sands of an Army which is, after all, Our Army, **the one which has to fight and win this war.**

I have been thinking for some time, that what we want to help to put things right (that is all we can aim at), is a Divisional Centre of Culture—a sort of University-cum-Holiday Camp-cum-Assault Course-cum-Propaganda Centre—all rolled into one. A Mecca, as it were.

At this centre we will teach only one thing. **How to fight in Battle on realistic common sense 1941-1951 principles.** And we will try to import a spirit of realism.

There's a very good new system of training called Battle Drill, invented originally by General Alexander, which is

being taught, I believe, in the 1st Divisional and 1st Corps Schools.

You know my views; I've talked about this often enough. You know what I want. I've chosen you to do this job because you're young and a business man with experience of organising things. Go up to those schools and pinch all their best ideas. When you come back, I'll give you the best billet in the area as the school premises. It's a very nice holiday camp with a swimming pool, tennis courts and lovely training country all around it. Everything you could wish for. Let me have some notes from you as soon as you are ready to go ahead."

THE CAPTAIN'S NOTES.

1. Tempo required—Hot Gospellers at their raciest. No elderly colonels and majors with ancient cadre syllabuses need apply. All the instructors will be young. They will be officers too. The officer who stands and slaps his stick in a somewhat bored manner whilst the sergeant gives the instruction is one of the targets we are going to shoot down. The subaltern is the platoon leader. He must therefore lead.

2. No good getting out a syllabus for the course and thrusting it at the battalions as a "*fait accompli*" from above. They will resent this dictation and find fault with it even if it is good, and it is pretty certain to be bad. Worse still, they will take no interest in it at all, not bother to read it properly, and send anyone who happens to be about, as a pupil on the course when it starts. The battalions themselves must design our course; they must feel that they made it, and that it is what they want.

Principle—The customer is always right.

3. A conference is the best springboard. Each battalion will send one young keen officer, nominated by name preferably, with ideas on the subject to discuss the proposed course. They will be locked in a room for as long as it is necessary. They will start by compiling a list of weaknesses and faults to be eradicated. They will form a Soviet and will only be let loose when they have hammered out a programme which illustrates and kills those faults for good. That programme will contain all their best ideas and will include the type of training they all feel they need most. They will all be keen on their course and will snap up vacancies. Their best men will be sent as pupils, for they will not

wish to miss it. They will feel that they built the course, that it is part of them. More, they will be very keen to come as instructors themselves, and you will be able to select only the best to run the show. If they are keen to come, at their own request, their units will (usually) encourage them.

4. This selection of instructors is the foundation stone on which the whole edifice rests. You cannot take too much time over it, nor take too much trouble with it. If you go through the usual channels and ask for instructors to be nominated with such and such a qualification in the time-honoured traditional manner, you deserve what you will certainly get. You cannot possibly describe on the cold hard wax of a half-legible stencil the ethereal qualities you need to make up the type of instructor you have made up your mind to get. You can't say "send me a fanatic." It doesn't matter how much he knows on paper, or how well qualified he is. Can he put it over? Has he got personality, punch and drive?

The Germans discovered with Hitler and with the Kaiser that fanaticism was the cheapest and most efficient form of motive power. They have harnessed that power and it now drives their war machine. We try to drive ours with a system of inanimate pedagogue instruction, that has about as much life in it as a dead cod on a fishmonger's slab.

Yet, in every unit we have our fanatics—dozens of them—buried alive, mostly. They, who love this weapon, that toy, this subject, that type of training—and who are **burning** with the passion to eat, sleep and talk of nothing else. Men, who have been on courses and done outstandingly well. Men, who feel that they have something to fight for. Men, who love teaching for teaching's sake, or fighting for fighting's sake. Men, who must have a hobby.

Thousands of ergs of energy of this sort are running to waste untapped, every day. Millions of ideas in thousands of heads are rotting. Harness these fanatics and you will get some real motive power.

5. **The Pupils.** Don't let us play with the problem, as in tanks, aeroplanes and everything else, so in production of trained men, the Army has thought in tens, where it should have thought in thousands. One odd vacancy on one odd course, however good, is a drop in the ocean. The rate of wastage in the Infantry from all sources is colossal, and it is so haphazard that it probably exceeds the rate of trained

production. If Netheravon produces 1.5 trained Mortar pupils per division per month, and each battalion loses on an average two Mortarmen per month, what is the nett progress made?

If you spend a year giving a man special training and then send him into the Air Force you don't progress very fast either. You move backwards. If you want some good training to make an **impact** on a battalion's life, don't send back one trained man, send back six or ten, and send them back **together**. Enthusiasm, fortunately, is both infectious and contagious. The benefits derived by each unit will increase about as the square of the number of pupils.

(Principle—Mass production).

6. **The School** is a centre of culture. It must, therefore be prepared to teach whatever subjects the battalions want. Infantry, Carriers, Mortars—anything. It must be a kind of booster pump, sucking in the benefit of good courses organized at higher levels and reproducing that benefit at lower levels for the masses. Why can't each Division have its Hythe and Netheravon, and its Catterick? There is no magic about them that keen "old boys" cannot reproduce accurately.

The location of the School is most important. It must be away from a big town—best if isolated in the country. Students will learn a lot from "talking shop" in the evenings and will "get together." It should be near Divisional H.Q. so that the G.O.C. can come over frequently without inconvenience.

7. The school must therefore be a big school.

THE SCHOOL TAKES SHAPE.

I.

The instructors were chosen—ten in all. Their qualifications were interesting. Two lawyers—both very argumentative. Two regular soldiers with many years of practical experience. (One had been a C.S.M.). Two with war service, one with an M.C. Several business men. A scholar of Balliol and a scholar of Queens. One Staff Officer with experience of umpiring many exercises. Two expert field-craft men who had qualified on the very good sniper's course at Bisley. The Fulham, centre-half. A Tank-hunting expert. All young, fit and keen.

These qualifications proved invaluable later on. The officer pupils take their instruction best if it has a rather academic flavour. The Sergeants know they must listen to an ex-Sergeant-Major—that's an ingrained habit. ~~Every-~~one appreciates a business man. Both officers and Sergeants will listen with most attention to those who have had actual war experience—particularly if they have done well. After all, you do like to feel that a man really has practical experience—that it isn't all just theory.

II.

The instructors were instructed. They went to the first Divisional and First Corps Schools and they were shown everything. Teaching methods, administrative pitfalls, programmes, organization. All their many questions were answered. They were given all the help they asked for, and it was much. These two schools had had nearly nine months of experience in teaching Battle Drill—experience which they readily passed on.

The Commandant went to any other schools he could find. He got a bookful of ideas from all over the country.

The instructors were ready.

III.

Now came the Soviet. The instructors had come back bursting with notes and ideas. They had all the General's own training notes, his help and his ideas. Not only had they the complete programmes they had just seen carried out, but their heads were full of old courses, demonstrations they had seen, ideas they had worked out on exercises, schemes they had invented and schemes they had stolen. They had any number of new ideas. There was more than enough material for a month's course. How to compress it into a fortnight?

Those arguments! No quarter—don't consider anybody's feelings. Be as rude as you can. Far into the night the battle went on. Rows were frequent and inevitable, but the programme was hammered out.

IV.

You can read a copy of that programme at the end of this book! It is quite ordinary to look at. You will see that the first two days comprises a refresher course in elementary fieldcraft—boyscouting. The standard in all Divisions is so low and the importance of this subject in the technique of infiltration so high, that it is useless to go on to higher matters until it has been learned—thoroughly learned and understood.

Then come the drills proper.

THE THEORY OF BATTLE DRILL.

For the idea of Battle Drill, we are all indebted to General Alexander. Here is what he wrote on a preface to his very first notes on the subject written soon after the Dunkirk evacuation:—

"A Drill for Battle."

"From Knowledge to Achievement is always a step, but the step is made from Knowledge and not from ignorance."

As a nation of games players, we all know the necessity of teaching young people the orthodox technique of sport. In cricket, we coach the hopeful batsman on strict and experienced lines; a ball which is well pitched up must be met in this way, a short ball should be played in that way, and a long hop may be dealt with in another way and so on. By such well tried methods we can reasonably hope to turn the young enthusiast into a fairly good performer. The naturally brilliant bat may soon depart from the orthodox methods he has learned, but his progress to a first-class player is from the knowledge of the orthodox and NOT from ignorance of it.

Boxers learn the technique of the ring, athletes that of the track; golfers, tennis players and all the other galaxy of successful sportsmen must all go through the hard school of apprenticeship before they can reach Olympian heights and yet, when we come to the supreme game of all, we ignore that which we know to be true. The technique of fieldcraft is not taught by rules of conduct but by principles, because it is commonly supposed that anything more definite than principles tends to destroy initiative. Is this really true? And if it is. How is it that the greatest games players have achieved the eminence they have? Surely a soldier on the battlefield, beset by fear and doubt, is in far more need of a guide to action than any games player at Lords or Wimbledon. Better to know instinctively some orthodox line of conduct, than to be paralysed by the uncertainty of what to do.

Let us, therefore, study and draw up lines of conduct—simple guides for the simple soldier, so that we may ensure that our soldiers when faced with problems on the battlefield will have an answer to them."

The close order drill now taught on dozens of barrack squares is the Battle Drill of past ages—the way men used to fight in practice in the campaigns which culminated at Waterloo. Why not work out a new drill—based on the way they will have to fight now?

A bitter fight ensued as soon as the pamphlet containing the above introduction had been published. The die-hards did say—"You cannot teach tactics as a drill. You will kill initiative. Impossible to lay down anything definite about tactics!"

What nonsense this is! Could anything really kill initiative? The man who has got it will use it, whatever you teach him, or he hasn't got it; and the man who hasn't got it will dither and meander unless you teach him **exactly** what to do and when to do it.

Practical experience shows that Battle Drill encourages initiative if correctly taught. The principles of Battle Drill are just these:—

1. You take each movement and operation of war and analyse it—break it down to its bare essentials.

2. You then work out an ideal plan for dealing with that movement or operation in ideal conditions—getting as many opinions and ideas as you can from practical people who have had to undertake that operation in War under Fire.

3. You then teach that ideal plan as a Drill. Drill in the Army is getting down to business in civil life. Every private soldier understands that drill must be learned **thoroughly**. He will therefore really **learn** it—not chew a straw which he now does on all schemes, because schemes to him aren't business.

4. You teach a number of variations to the Drill to adapt it to varying circumstances or varying ground conditions.

5. You make it quite clear at the conclusion of your teaching that the Drill is a means to an end. You are not being dogmatic about anything but the learning of the drill. The Drill once learned must be mastered, it must not be allowed to master you. You are ensuring that every subaltern, sergeant, corporal and **private soldier** has a clear idea of the ideal plan photographed on his mind. He will know what is being aimed at, what the battle is all about,

what everyone is trying to do—things he never knew under the old training system.

Then with that ideal plan in his mind (if he has imagination), he will work out such an adaptation as the circumstances dictate. (More often than not the ideal plan, or one of the variations, will fit). If he has no imagination he will just carry out the drill woodenly—and he still won't do too badly.

6. Battles in this confused mobile warfare have been won and lost by small parties—sections or individuals, cut off and isolated—fighting their own battles alone. The Germans specialise in this type of fighting—infiltration—as it is called. It is a war of little wars, one within another. Every private soldier, therefore, must now be something of a tactician. He wants to understand at least what his Commander is trying to do. If he sits and waits for orders and obeys like an automaton without thinking, he will very often continue to sit, for communications in this type of warfare are very difficult to establish. He must not sit, he must **ACT**. Whatever the risks, victory or defeat, the issue may be in his hands alone. In infiltration tactics, platoons may soon find themselves scattered over the countryside and it will be fatal if at the crucial moment, Corporal Brown can only be got to move out of his hole from A to B to fire at Z in order that C and D can get forward, if he receives a direct written message to do so. Corporal Brown will certainly sit down and do nothing if given no plan. So Corporal Brown must understand the general plan—the general underlying idea of what, everyone on the battlefield is trying to do—just as much as Captain Smith must understand it. He can then employ his own initiative at all times. **Thus Battle Drill will in practice develop the initiative of all ranks.**

7. Once the battle is joined, Captain Smith **really** will have little influence upon it. It will be won or lost by Corporal Brown and dozens of others like him—by their skill or lack of skill on the battlefield. Captain Smith imagines himself at the moment as the Tree—the leading actor, the king-pin in the show. But he is not—he is only the Cochrane. Once the show is on he can only stand in the wings and let it rip, giving a little aid occasionally from the prompter's box.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEA OF BATTLE DRILL.

On 6th February, 1941, the Army published "Tactical Notes for Platoon Commanders." It was none other than General Alexander's original pamphlet—but with the rather provocative introduction in a very modified form. Eight months later! What had happened in the meantime?

Fortunately, like the wars, the Battle Drill had not stood still in the meantime. It had progressed. The teaching of the schools now had months of experience behind it—practical experience—largely of men who had fought themselves, and who had many suggestions to offer.

The principle lines upon which that progress had been made were:—

1. **Drill.** This was applied to every movement. Thus the number of drills were very much increased. (Object to get thoroughness).

2. **Speed.** It was found that the average speed of the average soldier on all occasions was a painfully slow saunter. That's how he jogged along in civil life and he won't move any faster in war (real or imaginary). This pace may have been all very well in 1916, when a slow plod behind a creeping barrage was thrust upon the soldier by the rigid boundaries of trench warfare. But it is no good at all in mobile warfare.

You have fire, you have movement (those much misunderstood **MERE WORDS**) (see footnote). That is the basis of modern tactics.

When you are firing you are usually stationary and you are giving the enemy all you have got in the way of lead.

But when you are moving, you are, or very soon become, the **TARGET**. You must always move, therefore at the **maximum** speed of which you are physically capable. Give the enemy a difficult moving target to hit, if you have to give him the target at all. You do this not only to save your skin—it will help you to achieve **surprise**. (Another **MERE WORD**).

Surprise is a nasty little packet of British Infantry with a Tommy Gun and a Bren Gun who have whistled round a flank like lightning and are now pouring lead into the

FOOTNOTE: A "MERE WORD" is a phrase which the Army uses every day as the answer to everything, but which has become so clouded by misconception that nobody understands it any longer.

enemy's rear whilst he has still got his eyes glued on the place they came from.

That is fine. It is excellent, if un-English, to shoot the enemy in the back. That is the best place to shoot them every time. If you think it out, that is the aim of all sound tactics—murder without the loss of casualties yourself. How often is this appreciated?

The acquisition of speed across rough country requires great powers of physical endurance, training, guts, and organization. The best method of carrying every weapon at high speed must be studied. Loads must be frequently changed, men rested. Thinking and planning at the double is an art in itself.

The principle of speed also necessitates the study of a new paragraph in every Commander's appreciation. "How fast shall I go?"

This question can only be answered correctly by a Commander who has studied to the last ounce exactly what his men can and cannot take. He will find they can go much faster than he thinks.

Most of all—the achievements of speed demands real qualities of leadership in the Platoon and Company Command. He must be able both to take it himself and to dish it out. He alone sets the pace. The power to lead 31 men in a wide flanking movement through two or three difficult natural and unnatural obstacles where there are NO ROADS and to bring them out with all their weapons in perfect order ready and fit to fight immediately, cannot be acquired without constant practice.

These qualities just cannot be improvised at the last minute on the battlefield on the principle—"it will be all right on the day." Some of our troops at the moment, never ever get off roads and tracks on training—they are road bound and road-minded to the nth degree.

Of course, it is well appreciated that in actual war there are many occasions when doubling at top speed will be impossible, and a few when it may be inadvisable. But a Platoon trained to act and think at the double can always walk extremely well. A Platoon trained only to walk will become a useless rabble if suddenly required to run.

Speed is such an important ingredient at all stages of modern warfare that it must be developed as a mental as well as a physical quality. You can train yourself to be always on your toes, by always doing everything you have to do—getting on a 'bus, running upstairs, going up to

the "O" Gp, going on a recce—at top speed at all times.

We are far too slow and cumbersome in our practice methods. Minutes in battles are vital. Orderly speed will come only with training.

ALL BATTLE DRILL, at every stage, is therefore taught at all times—**AT THE DOUBLE**. Commanders are thinking constantly "How can I save time?"

3. **Jargon.** Battle Drill and Orders.

Terse orders are part of the essence of leadership.

Battle Drill is evolving a new vocabulary—a form of verbal shorthand which everyone understands and which therefore saves long and wasteful explanations. Most of these words are self-explanatory (see vocabulary at end of book). They are not MERE WORDS because the drill teaches the students the **exact** meaning of each word.

The effect of Battle Drill upon orders has been most interesting to watch.

Under the old training system "orders" have been elevated to unholy heights. The commander gives out bad orders—the battle is lost. The commander gives out good orders—the battle is won.

Of course, there is no gainsaying the undoubted value of good clear orders. But, it must be fully realized that poor execution will often follow them, and this may be nobody's fault. When troops have got moving on the ground in mobile warfare, the picture may become so confused, and the respective forces may become so interlocked so rapidly, that the carrying out of orders given a quarter of an hour ago may become impossible. The small force that finds itself in such a position will under the present training system sit down and wait for fresh orders, which it probably will be unable to get. Under the new system, its commander will understand and apply the principles of Battle Drill himself and push on if he possibly can. Thus, momentum will be maintained continuously always, if there is the slightest chance to get on.

It may sound like heresy to say that, on dozens of occasions, in practice, where battledrill principles have been applied on the ground by humble corporals and lance-corporals, platoons badly handicapped by bad orders at the start have still done extremely well. The influence of orders upon results has not been nearly so marked as it usually is.

Men have known what to do instinctively—and they have done it automatically.

Initiative will never be put into a man's head by the best orders in the world and initiative can be badly cramped by a system which so elevates orders that the private soldier thinks he has no thinking to do. Battle Drill—the system by which every man carries the general outline of the commander's plan in his head and must apply the plan if he possibly can—in practice encourages and develops individual initiative to a very marked extent.

Quoting again from General Alexander's notes—"The least sign of weakening on the part of the defence will be taken advantage of, the sections of the leading platoon seizing every opportunity to press forward—WITHOUT AWAITING ORDERS FROM THE REAR."

4. **New Drills.** The following drills have been developed since the publication of the original pamphlet:—

- (a) River crossing.
- (b) Avoiding a village or defended locality (by-passing).
- (c) Hunting tanks in night harbour (in process of development).
- (d) Movement across country and along roads when not in contact.

5. **The Mnemonic System.**

Has been used for the first time in defence (See Defence).

6. **The development of the "Team Spirit."** The idea put over in training is that each platoon is a football team training for a big match (or an orchestra learning to play a complicated piece of music).

The individual members of the team—the wing forwards and the centre half for example—must know a number of stock moves which they will put into practice instinctively whenever a suitable occasion arises. They must not stand and wait for a written message from the captain.

The inside forwards can only get the goals if there is real co-operation between every member of the team.

THE SCHOOL OPENS.

Following the principle of "Mass Production," the students collected for each course were 64 in number—two complete platoons (later increased to 74). One platoon consisted entirely of platoon commanders, and the other entirely of sergeants. Later, platoons were composed of company commanders and C.S.Ms., and included all Arms—Artillery, R.A.S.C., R.E. (everybody).

Intention. Seven zealous students all going back to a unit full of enthusiasm to make a real mass impression, on training.

Platoon sergeants.—It is essential that platoon sergeants shall be instructed. In this evanescent Army—they are the one fairly stable institution. They seem to get hold of a platoon quite often and stick to it for a reasonable length of time. Platoon commanders, on the other hand, are never left in uninterrupted possession of a platoon very long. They go off on sanitation courses, cookery courses, and what have you?

Platoon sergeants very badly need training in command. It is quite evident from our experience that most of them go out on schemes with platoon headquarters and stay with the anti-tank rifle and the 2-inch mortar for the rest of the day. They are absolutely lost when asked to take command and make a plan—don't know what an "O" Gp. is, or what an Appreciation is, or even how to read a map.

This state of affairs must be remedied. It is largely due to that very human weakness so obvious in many small commanders—the flattering feeling that "I am the kingpin. Without me the platoon is nothing and all will cease to revolve."

The test of the true efficiency of any organisation is "How well will it work in the absence of its creator?"

Officers should be encouraged to train their platoon sergeants by falling in, in the ranks themselves, with a rifle, and watching the sergeant at work. That is the only way to see him in his proper perspective.

Dress.—For the same reason—proper perspective—the school insisted on similar behaviour with its platoons. All students fell in each morning on parade, whatever their rank (majors included) in the ranks and full platoon equipment of every kind and description was carried punctiliously on all occasions. Students were so able to judge the effect of the school teaching on the man who really matters—the man in

the ranks. They were encouraged to ask themselves continuously "Are these people putting it over?" "Could I teach this lesson in a better way or in a more convincing manner?" "Could my platoon move as fast as this, or faster?"

Notebooks.—It was stressed that pupils had not come merely to learn, but to learn how to teach the drill. Full notes were essential, and notebooks were inspected by the instructors at regular intervals. A lot of help had to be given in note-taking.

Instructors.—Good fighting is a matter of correct individual attention to detail.

A continuous watch on each student and his every movement is the only key to this. Every eight students must have an instructor—observer with it at all times, ready to correct any mistake with vigour in no uncertain terms.

Ideas.—Students were pressed daily to think and produce their ideas. If they can improve a drill they must say so. Many students can and do make valuable contributions—small in themselves but of great cumulative value.

Discussion periods take place after each phase of a drill or exercise. No discussion or argument can be allowed during the action or all discipline will soon be lost. Very heated arguments are frequent in these intervals and are a real sign of success. But **on parade**—

"STRICT DISCIPLINE AT ALL TIMES."

Realism.—Too much care cannot be given to this. A liberal supply of thunderflashes, blank ammunition and live ammunition will help to give life to the battle. As soon as students have been given the opportunity of absorbing the drills in comparative peace, they must be trained to try to carry them out in difficult circumstances, **where real war is simulated as realistically as possible.** This demands a high degree of training amongst instructors—they must shout, make noises, throw thunderflashes, fire rounds and generally create the confusion and fog of war. They will not be able to do this if they are self-conscious and lack self-confidence, or if they feel that such conduct is in bad taste.

The firing of live S.A.A. at the students is also most desirable. It is impossible to depict the whine and buzz of a bullet by verbal imagery alone. Students must learn to discover quickly where the enemy is located if they are to kill him before he kills them. In war they will do this mostly by developing their powers of hearing, rather than

by using their powers of seeing. They must learn the art of "reading the battle with their eyes."

A number of crack shots should be included in the school demonstration Platoon. They can fire shots close to the students with little risk if they are reliable men.

Our experience has been considerable and we have never had, or looked like having an accident.

The value of this shooting cannot be exaggerated. It is a great psychological stimulus in training and it is incomprehensible that the Army have not encouraged it long ago. Dozens of men are killed and injured in road accidents in Army training every day. Risks must be taken if lives are to be saved in war by putting fully trained men on to the battlefield. It is a paradox that the present cautious system involves a prodigal waste of lives, for it puts large numbers of untrained men on to the battlefield. The present safety rules, for instance, are so severe that most trained soldiers tend to look on a Grenade as if it were a rattlesnake.

Method of Instruction. Men simply don't learn from lectures, even very good ones. They do learn by seeing things and they learn much more by doing things.

The system of instruction advocated is, therefore :—

(a) A short lecture outlining the principles and rules of the drill:

(b) A demonstration by the demonstration platoon, showing :—

(i) The **w**rong way;

(ii) The **r**ight way;

of executing the drill with a good running commentary by the instructor (a different one for each drill).

In giving "**the WRONG way**," the faults should be only slightly exaggerated and should be based on practical experience. If the mistakes made are utterly foolish NO lessons are learned by the spectators whose reaction is "I should never behave like that." This type of demonstration should show a man who is trying very hard and who has the right idea, but who just cannot put it into execution because he hasn't had enough practice with his team.

The demonstration of "**the RIGHT way**," must be absolutely perfect, for faults and mistakes will always be reproduced by the students with complete perfection. If it is decided to leave in one or two mistakes to see if the students are really alert (quite a good idea) they

must be vigorously pointed out at the conclusion of the party.

(c) Practice by the students "walking through the drill" on a parade ground or playing field devoid of any tactical complications.

At this stage, no toys should be used—boating should be across an imaginary river, marked by tapes, with an imaginary boat; wood-fighting with a wood represented by six sticks stuck in the ground.

This phase is the most important of all. It should not be left (whatever lengthening of the day's work is involved) until every student can execute every movement **perfectly** (DRILL), and can understand thoroughly the tactical reason for it. **Each student must know what each man in the team has to do and WHY HE HAS TO DO IT.**

This phase is not only first-class training in itself. It shows men how to progress in tactical training during those odd half-hours when there are no stores or facilities available. It teaches them furthermore to exercise their imagination and power of improvisation—qualities which most students are found to possess in great measure, but which they rarely get the opportunity to use on training.

You will find that soon students will revel in discovering new "nuances" during these performances—tying up imaginary boats, or rowing with imaginary oars, or getting imaginary wet feet.

(d) Running through the drill at battle drill pace (MAX.).

(e) Gradual application of the drill to more and more difficult ground, finally incorporating a few variations to adapt it to the ground.

(f) Carrying out schemes in which the drill has to be applied. Those schemes should consist of a number of little situations, one following the other, in rapid succession, each giving scope for the application of the particular drill being taught. After each situation, students should be changed round within the Platoon and should carry out a fresh task, *e.g.*, from Platoon Commander to No. 2 on the Mortar.

This phase gives every student the opportunity of playing several different parts in the platoon during the day and of getting the true picture of what every

individual man in the TEAM must do if success is to be achieved by all.

It directs the students attention to every detail of the battle by making him do it himself.

It should be emphasized constantly, that this is not "Just another scheme or T.E.W.T." but a **Team Practice Period—to be Memorized.**

(g) **All day Schemes.** A certain number of all day schemes should be included which give scope for the application of several different drills.

These days must be very tough and must test the physical endurance of the student to the full continuously. It is when he finds that he is nearly "all in" and still has to go on planning his attack and urging on his men to new efforts that the Platoon Commander will realize the true value of the Battle Drill system.

The big battle day should be a foodless day.

On all these schemes, a lively enemy is necessary—one who, if possible, dresses in imitation German uniforms, speaks a few words of dog German, fires plenty of ammunition, live and blank, and one who puts in local counter-attacks with the greatest rapidity on every possible occasion.

(h) **Special Exercises.**—One or two special exercises should be included without an enemy where the students apply the drills, **using and firing all their platoon weapons.**

WITH LIVE AMMUNITION.

Objects.—

(i) To get into their heads that it is the **FIRE-FIGHT THEY ARE OUT TO WIN.** They must realise the terrific killing power carried in the hands of modern platoons even without the help of any supporting arms. They will never realise this unless they actually experience it for themselves. Troops who go about clicking triggers on scheme after scheme get a feeling of impotence. They don't believe they would succeed in their tasks in real war. They will develop a decided feeling of superiority and confidence when they have realized their own strength.

(ii) To get out of their heads the very prevalent delusion that infantry can do nothing offensive without barrages, or tanks, or dive-bombers, or all of them, and that all they will have to do on the day is to walk into posts which have already been completely

wiped out by these supporting arms. This idea is very widespread and every newspaper fosters it perhaps unintentionally. Thus, that fatal front-line disease—INACTIVITY—is born.

Teach that clever use of weapons combined with clever use of ground and good teamwork within the platoon—Battledrill—will get a platoon infiltrating through on its own, full of confidence in itself. Teach that crouching in holes waiting for tanks will mean defeat. The infantry must be offensive and must rely on itself.

(iii) To practice the student in the art of COVERING FIRE (a mere word) and in the art of avoiding BUNCHING. No one can learn when to switch on and when to switch off covering fire, when covering fire is or is not necessary, how to observe fire, how to avoid masking your own fire—except by actual experience with live ammunition. If you bunch in front of a man with a Tommy Gun, you will not live to bunch again.

This type of practice involves risk and is excellent training for the platoon commander and the N.C.O. in the real responsibilities of his command. Clever use of fire by him will get men on and push them safely through; blunders will involve great danger. On these occasions instructors are required with every section as "Safety men."

Reports.—It was the practice to give good reports on students who did outstandingly well and bad reports on those who did very badly.

These reports produced some very surprising results.

X—, a very bumptious, rather lazy, careless fellow, who was always a nuisance to his company commander, showed great zeal when leading his platoon across difficult country and could rally them and always get the last ounce out of them. Y—, whose notebook was perfect, and whose record was perfect, soon showed that when he was tired, weary and hungry, he couldn't bother to try or to think, and the leadership of his platoon passed right out of his hands.

But, that is just what happens in real war. It isn't always the people one thinks will do well, who will do.

DRILL FOR FIELDCRAFT.

PRINCIPLES.

(i) It is not cowering in a hole in the ground.

It is not using ground to hide from the enemy.

It **IS** using ground to enable you to get unseen closer, ever closer, to the enemy **WHOM YOU ARE GOING TO KILL. FIELDCRAFT IS OFFENSIVE.**

(ii) You cannot kill the enemy unless you know where he is; you must find him first, then hit him—all in a split second. Therefore, accurate, trained **OBSERVATION** is the only answer.

(iii) Cover from view is not cover from fire **if YOU HAVE BEEN SEEN** getting there—Burst of Fire—Troops rush behind bush and stay there (it happens every day). Result—SUICIDE.

DRILLS TO BE LEARNED.

1.—Individual Movement Without Arms.

(a) **Crawling Correctly.**—Chest and crutch flat on ground, all motive power provided by a thrust forward from the thighs. Body keeping flat, hugging the ground but rolling slightly from side to side like the crawl stroke in swimming.

(b) **Walking correctly by day.**—Rifle in left hand across body ready for instant action in all positions. Head up, **OBSERVING—NO HEAD BENT SHAMBLE.** The human ostrich is a foolish bird.

(c) **Moving silently at night.**

(i) **Walking.**—Lifting each foot well clear of the ground in a semi-circular sweep; putting it down carefully keeping the body perfectly balanced. Learn to "freeze" instantly during this drill.

(ii) **Walking-Squatting-on-the-Haunches**—(Cossack Dance method), with each leg making a semi-circular outward sweep.

(iii) **Crawling on Hands and Knees**—each hand feeling carefully for a safe spot, then placing each knee silently on that spot before moving on.

2.—Individual Movement With the Rifle.

(a) **Crawling Correctly.**—Rifle in left hand across the body, nose-cap kept off the ground to avoid dirt entering the barrel. **OBSERVE CONSTANTLY.** Beware of bayonet sticking into the ground.

(b) **Walking correctly.**—Rifle in left hand across the body. Head up, OBSERVE CONSTANTLY. Rifle never in right at the short trail after contact gained.

3.—Individual Movement With the Bren Gun.

(a) **Crawling. Method (i).**—Student lying on his side. Gun resting on the instep of the lower leg which is kept flat on the ground. Propulsion is achieved by kicking with the upper leg. NOT a very good method.

Method (ii).—Student lying on stomach, gun across and above the head. Gun held by the butt and by the bipod legs and pushed forward by the arms as the body moves forward. (This method can also be applied to the Rifle).

Method (iii).—(Much the best).—No. 1 and No. 2 on the Bren work as a team. They move in echelon with the gun between them, lifting the gun off the ground by the bipod legs and the butt-strap and placing it down again as each bound forward is made.

This method keeps the gun quite clean and each man is in his correct position ready for instant action.

BREN GUNS **MUST NOT** be dragged flat along the ground. They are liable to frequent stoppages if soil gets into the working parts and they cannot be treated with too much care. **JAMMING IS A CERTAINTY IF THIS WARNING IS IGNORED**—it happened frequently in France.

All the above drills require a great deal of practice, and the development of special muscles. A long crawl is a very exhausting business and an untrained man cannot possibly do it.

Every man in the company must be able to do these drills, including the company commander.

There is NO Divine Right of Commanders (D.R. of C.) which exempts them from the inexorable laws of battle. A bad movement by any one man, however junior, may cost the lives of himself and his comrades.

4.—Movement with typical Platoon Weapons.

(a) **Bren Gun.**—Two rifle slings can be joined together and fastened in a loop round the gun. This loop goes conveniently over the shoulder and the weapon is carried like a saxophone.

It can be fired very easily from the hip in this position, or kneeling, can be used (hosepipe method) against enemy aircraft. It is the easiest method of carrying the gun when running.

(b) **Anti-Tank Rifle.**—Crawling methods identical with the Bren Gun—echelon method much the best.

Running with the A.Tk. Rifle—it **MUST** keep up across country. This can only be done if the platoon sergeant and the No. 1 and No. 2 work as a team—rotating. Two men carry the A.Tk. Rifle, one holding the barrel, the other the butt; the third man carries two rifles.

(c) **2-in. Mortar.**—Crawling.—Open the mortar in front of you and push it forward across your head (same as Bren Gun).

Running.—Open the mortar and hook it up on top of your pack behind your head with the barrel across your shoulder. This is much better than using the carrying handle, and the Mortar is ready for instant action.

5.—Concealment and Camouflage.

(a) **Tin Hat**—most conspicuous, must be dull and hidden—use of nets is good. If foliage covering is used, it must harmonise with the background or it will give you away, *e.g.*, a waving form where there are no ferns.

(b) **Blanco and Polished Brass.**—This seems too silly to mention, but it is still the eternal rule in many units. If the L.C.C. sent out its sewer men to practice their job in their best suits, with their trousers pressed and boots and buttons polished, it would be no more stupid than sending out soldiers to practice fighting in a similar state. Battle is a dirty business, and it can only be learned by getting quite dirty all over. Men will not play if they are required to appear dressed up as peace time soldiers at 0900 hrs. daily and to get dirty again at 0930 hrs. daily. *See footnotes.

* FOOTNOTES :—

1. Some Units have successfully surmounted the guard mounting difficulty by keeping special extra sets of equipment in each company to be used for Guard Mounting only. They are cleaned up when necessary by the billet orderlies.

2. By Div. order ALL brass will now be painted over with Khaki Camouflage paint. This looks very smart—does not glint in the sun (dirty brass does) and is estimated to save every man three hours' wasted labour each week. The paint lasts for about three months. This reform was suggested by a regular R.S.M. with 15 years' experience of Army life.

The idea that troops can only be induced to maintain discipline by constant application of "brasso," "blanco," and "nugget" is a complete fallacy. The commander feels flattered if his troops are shining because of the impression they make on other troops and on the general public; he has a predisposition, therefore, to lull his common sense objections with the arguments that cleanliness develops a personal pride and raises morale.

Morale will be raised a thousand times higher if the troops feel that they know their job and that they will never be asked to offend the principles of common sense. It is easy to acquire a spurious discipline on the parade ground; it is NOT so easy to acquire a TRUE discipline which will still shine through mud and dirt.

Of course, "spit and polish" has a place. During periods of "Duty Company" and the like, men who have been dirty on training will polish as they never did before—for a change.

(c) **Eye-shields on Tin Hats.**—A major crime. Discipline is the only answer. Eye-shields greatly reduce efficiency and they should not be worn until gas is known to be used (see later remarks).

(d) **Ill-fitting Tin Hats on backs of heads.**—Officers are the worst offenders—they never will wear their tin hats properly; as a result they never fit and always fall off when speed is needed. This will NOT be all right on the day. (Divine Right of Commanders).

(e) **Use of Background.**

(f) **Use of Cover.**—Look through it, or round the side of it; never over it. Practice this again and again.

(g) **Raising weapon to fire from behind Cover.** This simple operation requires great skill. A jerky hasty movement will attract attention, ruin the effect of a good stalk, and cause the death of the soldier in battle.

6.—Stalking.

This can best be learned by playing the fieldcraft games explained in Pamphlet 33. Stalking each other; capturing flags, etc. These games are great fun and the troops never tire of them. Even senior officers have been heard to say "You never saw me!" Troops cannot possibly get too much practice. Instil the principle "Survival of the Fittest"—the law of the jungle is the law of war.

The best of these games for making progress are:—

(a) Stalking a blindfolded man to see how near you can get to him without his hearing you. He must point at you accurately to win.

(b) Grandmother's footsteps. Silent approach to back of man. He can turn round rapidly and he wins if he catches anyone moving.

7.—Observation.

Requires training, training and then more training. Our national standard is abysmally low because we are townsmen largely, and never look properly at anything except the shop windows.

We are up against an enemy who has made observation an exact science, and who is far ahead of us. The German is equipped with field-glasses and similar instruments on a very lavish scale and he knows how to use them. We must improve in this art, for he who "sees first, shoots first."

Platoon commanders and section leaders have yet to learn how to organise and to benefit by observation when in contact with the German infantry.

As soon as the enemy are within long range machine-gun fire—before it, if possible—nothing can be achieved without eyes—intelligent eyes—watching continuously.

All that is seen by the eyes must be passed at once to the section leader or platoon commander.

Let us suppose that a platoon is out after parachutists, has been debussed and is approaching an area where the enemy are reported to be. **Observation must be organised before movements starts. An observer will be detailed for each quarter of the circle.** The following should be the sort of procedure:—

Section Commander.—"Observers—Front, Pte. Jones; Right—Pte. Smith; Left—Pte. Black; Rear—Pte. Green. Report any enemy movement and the direction of enemy firing which may break out. Report action of our own troops when possible."

The section commander can now devote himself to directing the advance of his section according to the ground, detailing the distribution of weapons and ammunition and taking control.

Let us suppose that shortly after, the section is driven to ground by some bursts of machine-gun fire. The following should happen:—

Observer: "Enemy opened up on the Right, Corporal."

Section leader goes to Pte. Smith, who points to the area from which he judges the fire has come.

Meanwhile, the other observers continue to watch in the directions assigned to them.

The Section Leader wants better observation. Let us suppose that a house is close by:—

He says to Pte. Smith: "Get up into a top room of that house and watch that area for enemy movement. Pte. Gray, go with him and remain at the bottom of the stairs. Smith will tell you what he sees and you come and tell me. I shall remain for the present at the corner of this bank."

In this way the section leader has ensured that those enemy who have disclosed their presence by firing, are watched as effectively as possible.

The section leader (or the platoon commander) at every stage must place his eyes as a cricket captain sets his field. At every stage, both in darkness and daylight.

Observers should use their ears as well as their eyes. An experienced man can "read the battle" from the sound of the firing from both sides.

Every burst of small arms fire—every shell or mortar burst from the enemy or from ourselves, has been done with an object. A good man can interpret them all.

Observation must be intelligently placed and quick passing of information arranged for by the section leader and platoon commander.

This process must be carried out continuously.

This training of the section in observation is a difficult matter. But it is training, and the only answer is **Practice**.

8.—Observation Training Exercises.

(a) Litter a small area with typical battlefield objects. Class observes from 200 yards and marks positions of the objects on a paper panorama.

(b) Litter same area with troops—some badly hidden, some well hidden. Make them fire blank rounds at the class from their positions. Class observes and notes on paper panorama. Troops stand up, then disappear again (several times). Students go over and inspect the troops' positions at close range.

Teach the students to split up the area for observation into sections and traverse each section methodically.

Plenty of practice again is the answer. Sections must be trained to observe on all occasions AS SECTIONS. Each man must know that on all occasions besides having a position

detailed he must have a flank for observation detailed. He must ask his commander for this if it has been omitted. Only if the section observes as a TEAM always, whatever it is doing, will real results be obtained.

IN OBSERVATION—REMEMBER—

(i) Two men close together means an enemy L.M.G.

(ii) Three men close together means an enemy machine gun.

9.—Section Movement (before Contact with the Enemy).

(a) All the usual formations set out in section leading should be known and used as the ground dictates. **Our experience favoured:—**

(i) **Along roads.**—A.A. formation sections in echelon on opposite sides of the road, 15 yards between sections—5 yards between men. Advantages are:—

(A) Practically invisible from air.

(B) (Quite as important) Circulation of our own transport on the road unimpeded by marching troops. For reason (B) this formation **MUST ALWAYS** be adopted even in back areas.

(b) Nullified if D.R. of C.—Commander walking and talking in the middle of the road with his juniors. They **MUST** comply.

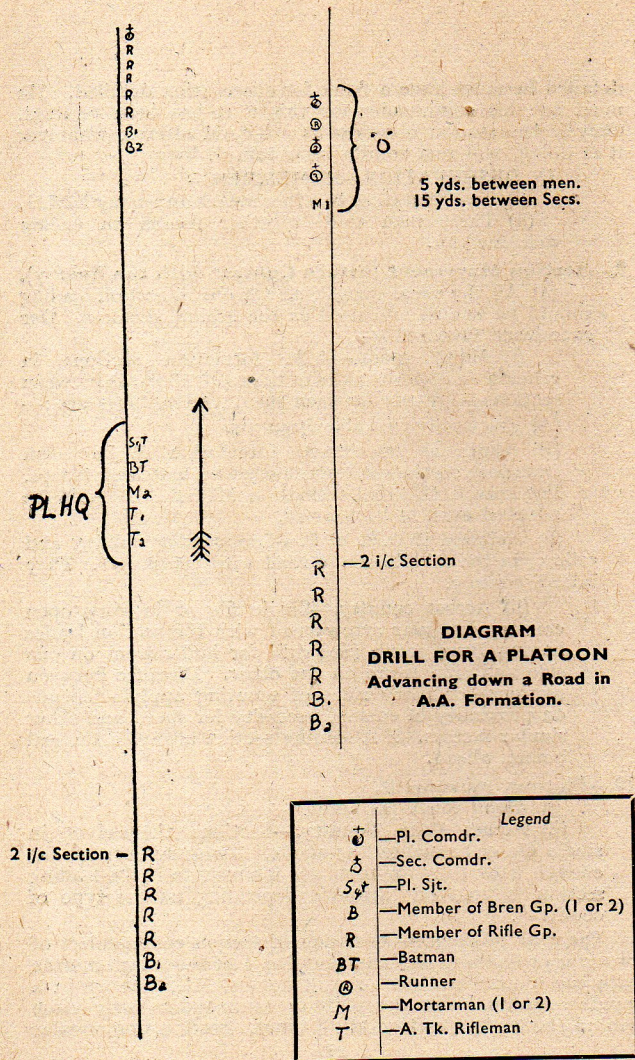
(ii) **Across country.**—Single file or in very open country irregular arrow head with the section leader having Bren group (See drill for infiltration) on one side and rifle group on the other. Distance between sections—ordinary rules of scouting apply—depends on proximity of enemy, necessity for speed and other similar factors. But leading section always a tactical bound ahead.

10.—Platoon Movement.

(i) **Along roads** (as above).

(ii) **Across Open Country.**—Sections themselves in single file or arrowhead as above. Two rear sections far enough back to allow room for manoeuvre if the leading section is fired on (distance depending on the type of country).

The "O" Group.—Consisting of section commanders of two rear or flanking sections, plus No. 1 of the 2-inch mortar with the mortar and one case of bombs, **MUST** move in a separate group, with the platoon commander fairly close behind the leading section **at all times**. Section Commander



of the leading section stays with his section. (Object—Speed in giving orders).

The Scouts.—Are inadvisable and unnecessary whether on roads or across country unless the platoon is moving in very close country known to be infested with enemy.

Some risks must be taken if speed is to be achieved. Scouts slow up the rate of advance considerably, and unless they are highly trained (which they never are) they find out nothing.

The two pathetic men, Tweedledum and Tweedledee, who wander along on schemes at the moment a few yards in front of the leading section, are an absurdity.

The best results will be obtained if every man in the section is disciplined to **observe** carefully in a particular direction, and if the whole section is treated as the eyes of the advance. **VITAL IMPORTANCE OF OBSERVATION TRAINING.** Eyes off the ground—really looking for something.

Selection of Lines of Advance.

Practice again, is the only answer. Stock appreciation is—covered approach on right, therefore I will attack on the right flank. If more than a cursory glance were taken it would probably be noticed that the less obvious and therefore more desirable line of advance exists on the left flank. Once the enemy have opened fire and the advance has become an **ATTACK**, the ideal is a simultaneous movement up both flanks (see pincer movement).

II.—Platoon Moves in Busses.

The normal bus holds one platoon fairly comfortably—too comfortably.

These busses at the moment are death traps because the troops inside them imagine they are on a peacetime charabanc jaunt. They go to sleep, soon abandon their arms and equipment, and discipline is unknown. Why do commanders, who would court martial their men for bad behaviour when marching, permit any sort of conduct as soon as troops are carried by M.T.?

Busses can, and should, be fortresses. There is always the danger in mobile warfare of these busses running into trouble, and the following drills are essential to safety once the enemy is near:—

(i) 'Bus commander keeps control all the time—discipline in the bus.

(ii) Bus commander details two men with Bren Gun to ride on the roof of the bus. *See footnote.

Tasks—(a) Best possible O.P.

(b) Both A.A. and immediate covering fire for debussing if the bus is ambushed.

(iii) Three Tommy Guns are manned and sighted through the bus windows for all round protection. Bren Guns are unsuitable as the protruding barrels are dangerous to other traffic.

(iv) Troops debus instantly if trouble occurs—covered by the Tommy Gun and the Roof Bren Gun.

(v) To allow for proper rest, whilst travelling, the bus commander must arrange a careful system of reliefs—BUT, men on duty are ON DUTY.

Game for Practising the Section in Winning the Fire Fight.

PHASE I.

Put the section in a section post with good fire positions round an arc of say 180° at ranges up to 600 yards. Have an assistant instructor lying beside every man.

PHASE II.

Groups of enemy (three or four in a group) previously put out in concealed positions at varying distances all round the arc start to advance towards the post on receipt of a signal from the chief instructor (e.g., waving a coloured flag). Some groups advance crawling, some walking, some running. In the early stages the groups advance separately; in the later stages two or more groups may advance at the same time from different directions. Some groups fire from their positions, others do not. Some groups use good fieldcraft, others are very bad.

PHASE III.

As each group exposes itself the section controlled by the section commander should bring rapid controlled accurate fire to bear on it with the minimum of delay. Points such as quick observation, good fire orders, correct assessment of ranges are carefully noted by each instructor.

* FOOTNOTE.—Bus roofs are quite strong enough to stand this easily. They are usually made for heavy luggage. There is NO danger from overhanging branches—these are all at much higher levels.

PHASE IV.

Groups successfully neutralised by fire from the post can be put out of action by flag signals from the director. The remainder are allowed to advance and assault.

NOTE.—This game teaches many valuable lessons in an exciting way. The section see for themselves what a difference skylines, background, speed, field-craft, jerky movements, use of isolated cover—make to their own ability to kill an enemy.

Practice Game for Improving Students in the Use of Ground and in the Selection of Lines of Advance.

PHASE I.

Section Commander with seven men—all students. Instructor points to an objective or, better still, "enemy," fires a round or two of blank at the students. (Range about 400/600 yards).

Instructor: "You want to get your section there (indicates a spot to the flank or rear of the place from which the fire originated)—5 minutes to make up your mind how you are going to do it. You must get there alive, i.e., unseen. If the enemy sees you, he will shoot you (indicated by firing another round of blank). I'll give you a tip—put yourself in the enemy's place and work out what he can see and what he cannot see. Then decide."

Student: "Ready to move, sir."

Instructor: "Off you go." (He goes round with them).

PHASE II.

Short inquest when objective reached—mistakes pointed out **vigorously**, looking back at the ground from the enemy's viewpoint.

PHASE III.

Exercise repeated on another piece of ground—time allowed 3 minutes.

PHASE IV.

And so on until every student can select the best line of advance instinctively in less than a minute.

NOTE.—This game is of immense practical value. It teaches the N.C.O. to stop and weigh up the ground before moving off and is the easiest way of making progress in the difficult art of selection of lines of advance.

Practice for Getting Students Accustomed to Fire, Accustomed to Getting Quickly into Positions from which Fire can be Returned. Accustomed to Moving under Fire.

PHASE I.

Place class lying well down in a hollow on a forward slope each one having 3 or 4 rounds of blank.

PHASE II.

Fire two or three Bren Guns and three or four rifles at them from different points on an opposite bank aiming about 20 to 30 yards above their heads. Range about 250 yards.

PHASE III.

Students crawl to fire positions and attempt to return fire. Each student should have an instructor with him to check his observation, range and aim.

NOTE.—Use tracer.

THE STUDY OF GROUND.

(From Senior Officers' School)

In modern war, to achieve the necessary speed, plans must be initiated from the map. The plan is confirmed by a reconnaissance but if the map is skilfully read the essentials of the plan will very seldom need to be altered.

To aid in visualizing the map the following drill is suggested: The key word is **GROUND**.

- G General.
- R Ridges.
- O Observation.
- U Undergrowth.
- N Non-passable.
- D Defilade.

Having decided on the area to be studied, which must be considerably wider than the area to be occupied or crossed, apply the first heading.

G. General.

Get a rough idea of the character of the area. Is it high, rolling downland or flat low lying fields, open or closed country, etc.

R. Ridges.

Take a grease pencil (any colour except blue) and mark on the talc, with a single line the highest part of all ridges and spurs (*i.e.*, the watersheds). Mark the streams or lowest lines of valleys and re-entrants in blue (*i.e.*, the watercourses).

O. Observation.

Mark with the other pencil any particular good view points or detached features with a circle.

YOU WILL NOW HAVE A SKELETON OF THE GROUND.

U. Undergrowth (or cover).

Study the location of villages, woods, belts of trees, scrub or rough ground.

N. Non passable.

Study the obstacles, the woods and villages again, rivers, canals and railway lines.

D. Defilade.

From doing the above, the covered lines of approach to any point and the areas which afford cover will now be easily picked out.

Having carried out the above drill a clear picture of the ground as a whole, its potentialities and its disadvantages, will have been formed in the mind.

When it has been so formed, **clean your talc**, and make up your mind. Remember the study of the ground if carried out as above will give you the probable enemy position and action as well as your own.

You will be able to remember and read the ground from the contours without the lines, circles, etc. The talc will be wanted to record your plan on clearly.

THE INFANTRY PLATOON.

A Drill for what it Carries.

All fighting drill order. Less Gas Capes—Respirators slung. (Note gas capes and respirators at the alert when it is known that chemical warfare has started or is believed to be imminent).

Section Commander.

Tommy Gun—6 mags each 20 rounds—Wire cutters.

Second i/c Section 1.

Rifle—50 S.A.A.—3 Bren Mags.

No. 1 on Bren L.M.G.

Bren—3 Mags.

No. 2 on Bren L.M.G.

Rifle—50 S.A.A. Utility pouches containing 6 Bren Mags—Spare Parts Wallet—3 Bren Mags in his own pouches.

No. 1 Rifleman.

Rifle—50 S.A.A.—3 Bren Mags.

No. 1 Bomber.

Rifle—150 S.A.A.—4 Grenades.

Smoke man.

Rifle—50 S.A.A.—4 smoke canisters, No. 14, Mk. 1.

No. 2 Rifleman.

Rifle—50 S.A.A.—3 Bren Mags.

PLATOON H.Q.

Sergeant—Rifle—50 S.A.A.—3 Bren Mags.

Runner—Rifle—50 S.A.A.—V. Pistol—12 White, 6 Red, 6 Green—3 Bren Mags.

Batman—Rifle—50 S.A.A.—3 Bren Mags.

No. 1 A. Tk.—A. Tk. Rifle—50 S.A.A.—1 A. Tk. Mag (5 rounds).

No. 2 A. Tk.—Rifle—50 S.A.A.—8 A. Tk. Mags in utility pouches.

No. 1 Mortar—Mortar—6 H.E. Bombs.

No. 2 Mortar—Rifle—50 S.A.A.—6 H.E.—6 Smoke Bombs.

NOTES—

1. Gas. Some slight risk is taken, but this does not mean any relaxation of gas precautions. The risk of gas in confused mobile fighting of forward infantry is not as great as in the old trench warfare, because it would probably hamper the enemy rather than help them. Fieldcraft and fighting efficiency are greatly improved by this dress, so the risk is worth taking.

2. **Bren Ammunition.** Each section has 21 magazines per Bren Gun plus sufficient additional ammunition to fill aa further 3 magazines. In addition there is in this drill a reserve of 9 magazines moving up with Platoon H.Q.

3. Only 1 set of **utility pouches** is carried per section. These pouches are uncomfortable and tend to reduce speed and efficiency.

4. **Smoke Canisters.** Most useful—are carried at the scale of 4 per section.

NOTE.—On a number of practice exercises with live ammunition against a typical platoon objective, the average ammunition expenditure has been about 3 or 4 mags. per Bren Gun and 3 to 6 H.E. Mortar Bombs.

All students (including many with much practical experience of actual fighting) have agreed that the volume of fire produced by this expenditure would in their opinion be adequate to neutralise the post.

A Drill for Infiltration (Section in the Attack).

Principles:—

1. Enemy weapons will be sited to cover all roads and tracks leading from your area to his as primary tasks. Therefore, your best chance of survival and success lies in **avoiding frontal attacks and avoiding roads.**

2. No advance is possible unless enemy's heads are kept down by weight of metal—**COVERING FIRE** is essential to any advance. The first essential is—**GAIN FIRE SUPERIORITY.** The assault should be regarded merely as a mopping up operation—not as an end in itself.

3. Each section is designed to provide its own covering fire to itself. It can, if necessary, rely on itself to get it forward. This is the primary task of the Bren Gun in the attack—to get the rifleman on.

4. Object of the attack is not so much to capture ground as to exterminate all Huns holding the ground. This object will not be attained if they are allowed to retreat alive. The enemy retreat must be **cut off** if at all possible. Therefore, the ideal place to attack is the flank or rear.

5. Either the Bren Gun (cut-off gun) must therefore work round as far in rear of the enemy as possible (best) or alternatively the assault must come in from the rear.

Reasons:—

(a) Only way to ensure extermination.

(b) Prevents reinforcements.

(c) Immense psychological value of opening up fire from the rear or the back of a flank. The enemy thinks he is surrounded and either retires or surrenders. He is particularly liable to do this if the fire comes from an automatic weapon.

BOLD USE of the BREN GUN—WILL PAY.

The actual drills for infiltration by a section are as follows:—

DRILL No. 1. This drill must be carried out, by the Platoon Commander as a matter of organization before going into action. Divide section into two parts named

Bren Group and Rifle Group (JARGON).

Bren Group: Nos. 1 and 2 on the gun. Possibly the 2 i/c and one or two additional men may be added if the section is over strength or if a lot of ammunition is likely to be needed with the gun (exceptional).

Rifle Group: The remainder led by the Section Commander. This group will deliver the assault (see below) when the following tasks will have to be done—snipers, grenadiers, wire cutters (possibly), assault men, smoke generator man (possibly). Each man will be detailed to his task before the section commences its attack. Number of men required to do each job will vary with the task and with the strength of the section.

Section moving forward organized as above comes under effective enemy fire (not just a few odd shots).

DRILL No. 2. Every man drops flat INSTANTLY WHERE HE IS AS IF SHOT and (unless ordered to do otherwise by the Section Commander) crawls forward or sideways to a fire position. Observes enemy and returns fire. (This drill prevents panic and dispersal of the section to the four winds and ensures CONTROL by Section Commander (*). See footnote.

DRILL No. 3. Section Commander **thinks** and assumes CONTROL. Asserts authority and orders section to make for a suitable section fire position, e.g., "Line that Bank"—"Make for that Hedge." (Note.—This may be done in two separate groups—Bren Group and Rifle Group).

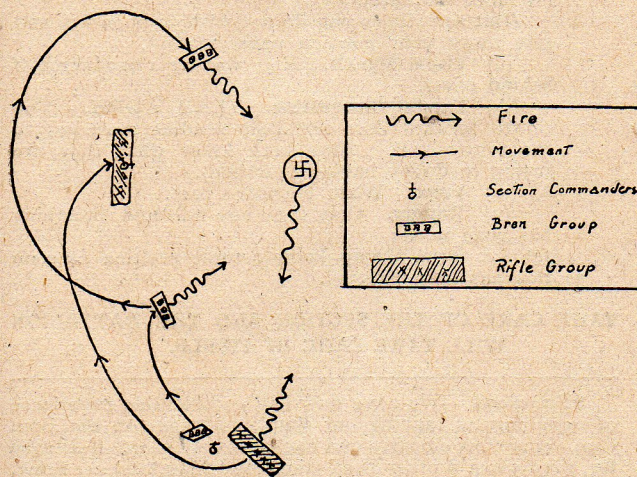
*FOOTNOTE.—(Drill No. 2). This drill is only a last resort for the private soldier, if he has received no other orders. A first-class N.C.O. will always have anticipated, and given "an anticipatory order," e.g., "If we come under fire across here all run forward to that hedge."

DRILL No. 4. Section Commander makes his recce and plans moves ahead as far as possible.

DRILL No. 5. Bren Group and Rifle Group are trained to bound forward down the flank selected by the Section Commander in the following manner:—

- Bren Group takes up first position or makes first bound as necessary.
- When it is in position Rifle Group bounds behind it and straight on past it.
- When the rifle group is in position Bren Group bounds behind it and on past it.
- This process of semi-circular flanking motion pivoted on the enemy post goes on until:—
 - Rifle Group has reached its assault position.
 - Bren Group has reached its CUT-OFF position (JARGON).
- Assault goes in.

Diagram No. 1.
INFILTRATION—SEC. IN ATTACK.



POINTS TO NOTE.

(a) One group must always be firing or down in a position where fire can be opened IMMEDIATELY it is needed (*i.e.*, in 5 seconds).

JARGON. "One foot must always be on the ground" in order to walk forward.

(b) A wide angle between groups at the assault is essential if one is to give covering fire to the other to the last moment. 90 degrees is the ideal to be aimed at.

(c) Either Bren or Rifle group MUST be in the rear of the enemy at the assault. CUT OFF (Jargon).

(d) Staccato, sensible, fire orders—Range 400—Enemy in bushes—give covering fire—or fire by observation.

(e) Each group must keep within voice control of the group commander, but it will often be well out of voice range of the other group in the section.

(f) **Intercommunication by:—**

(i) **Firing.** Opening of fire by a group tells the other group that it is time to move on, particularly if the gun taps out a message, *e.g.*, VICTORY "V"
(*) (See footnote).

(But sometimes you do not wish to open fire and give away your position unnecessarily).

(ii) **Visual Signals.** *E.g.*, waving a handkerchief behind cover.

(iii) **Careful Observation.** TEAM WORK. (The centre forward does not keep sending messages to the centre half. They both know what they are trying to do by having practised).

(iv) **Voice.** When bounding past.

(v) **Runner.** Only if all else fails and something has gone wrong.

(g) Let Bren Group know assault position as soon as this has been selected.

TAKE CARE OF THE SECTION AND THE BATTALION WILL TAKE CARE OF ITSELF.

*FOOTNOTE.—We have now had considerable experience of signalling by tapping out simple messages on the Bren Gun. It is most effective and can be clearly heard, if listened for, even when 9 other Bren Guns (and 2 Mortars) are firing.

DRILL FOR THE ASSAULT.

The section, having infiltrated successfully, is now in a position to assault. The drills for this are as follows:—

DRILL No. 1.

Both Bren and Rifle Groups are in position—angle 90 degrees between them if possible. 90 degrees means that FIRE SUPERIORITY can be kept up to the last possible moment.

A SNIPER crawls to a position from which he can cover a GRENADIER (more than one may be used). SNIPER will kill anyone trying to interfere with the Grenadier.

DRILL No. 2.

GRENADIER crawls forward to grenade range and throws grenade. (Alternative—SMOKE MAN throws SMOKE Canister).

DRILL No. 3.

On burst of grenade, or thickening up of smoke, rifle group assault. ALL firing from the hip as soon as they have come up level with the sniper and grenadier who join in the assault.

DRILL No. 4.

Section Commander is in centre of the assault and he **CONTROLS THE LINE.**

DRILL No. 5.

ALL ENEMY KILLED, assault group wheels to original line of advance.

DRILL No. 6.

Rifle Group without halting consolidates at least 50 yards beyond the enemy post. (No resting and smoking in the post—battle discipline).

DRILL No. 7.

Section Commander signals up the Bren Group to join the consolidation.

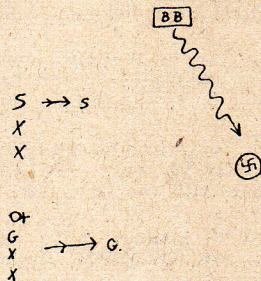
DRILL No. 8.

Section reforms and advance continues.

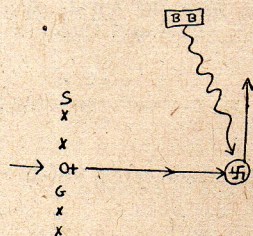
VARIATION.

One or two men in the section carry small smoke generators. These can be easily thrown a long way and they provide a very effective screen for 2½ minutes. This has been found most useful and it is well worth adopting as a drill—most students now prefer it to the Grenade or 2-inch Mortar Smoke Bomb if the wind is favourable.

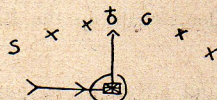
Diagram No. 2.
DRILL FOR THE ASSAULT.



First Phase.
READY TO ASSAULT.



Second Phase.
THE CONTROLLED ASSAULT—FIRING FROM THE HIP.



Third Phase.
CONSOLIDATION.

S - Sniper
G - Grenade Thrower
BB - Bren Group



Section
Commander
Movement
Fire

* Rifleman

DRILL FOR THE PINCER MOVEMENT.

All sections having learned the drill for individual infiltration, the platoon in the attack can now be considered. The drills for this are:—

DRILL No. 1.

Point section is pinned down by heavy fire, crawls to fire position, OBSERVES and FIRES. Enemy fire is so heavy that Section Commander cannot get on by infiltration on his own. Section becomes the FIRE SECTION (Jargon).

TASK.

TO BEAT DOWN ENEMY FIRE—TO GAIN FIRE SUPERIORITY.

DRILL No. 2.

Platoon Commander (with "O" Group (Drill)) immediately behind) makes recce and plan very quickly.

DRILL No. 3.

Platoon Commander gives SHORT ORDERS to "O" Group, e.g., "Enemy on that ridge—pincer movement—No. 1 FIRE SECTION—No. 2 Right—No. 3 Left. I am going with No. 3 Section Mortar 3 rounds H.E. now, smoke later by observation. R.V. 100 yards beyond objective. Usual signals. Any questions? MOVE!"

NOTE.—FIRE SECTION must be in position to bring heavy fire on the enemy before pincers move out of cover. Pincers must wait if it is not in position.

DRILL No. 4.

Having captured the objective.

Consolidation.

Assaulting section goes to centre. Second Section in goes right across the post to the opposite flank. Fire section comes up to the other flank. All consolidate well beyond the enemy post in the line of their original advance. (150 yards past the post is ideal) and in a position for ALL ROUND observation and fire.

DRILL No. 5.

Section Commander reports casualties and ammunition state to Platoon Commander.

Points to Note :—

(a) Pincer must be wide—**SWEAT SAVES BLOOD. But** Sections in **PRONGS OF Pincer ADVANCE AS A WHOLE**. They **DO NOT** drop off their **BREN** Guns and advance in separate groups (see previous drill) until they are fired on and they have to do so. Then they split up and carry out the section drill.

(b) Make good big bounds.

(c) Usual principles of **COVERING FIRE**—only fire when necessary to help on movement.

(d) One section will not wait for the other before assaulting—too dangerous.

(e) If one pincer is late it will fire as best it can to create a diversion as soon as it hears the assault going in from the other flank, *e.g.*, Grenade bursting.

Alternatively, if smoke generators are used by one pincer to cover its assault these provide a useful signal to the other to rush in (this is the best signal).

(f) Platoon Commander will go with the section likely to arrive **first**.

(g) Fire section must beware of crawling on open forward slopes. Fire Section Commander must observe movements of pincers as well as enemy if he is to give adequate well-timed covering fire, *e.g.* When he sees a pincer coming to a sticky open patch, he must give a burst of rapid with all he's got **INSTANTLY** to create a diversion. He must try to draw enemy fire and to distract enemy attention by moving his positions as often as he can. **TEAM WORK—FIRE SECTION** must realise that it is **their** fire which gets the pincers on.

(h) Platoon Commander must direct the consolidation.

(i) R.V. is essential if in close country.
(j) Platoon H.Q. will remain under Platoon Sergeant in area of Fire Section. **Platoon Sergeant must—**

(i) Get the Platoon Commander's plan from the Pl. Comd. as soon as he sees that the "O" Group has dispersed.

(ii) Control fire from 2-inch Mortar, ordering variations if necessary of the Platoon Commander's Orders. This little weapon is invaluable and **MUST BE EXPLOITED FULLY**.

The 2-inch Mortar may follow one of the pincers if it is unable to see the line of advance and the objective sufficiently well from the fire sections area.

(iii) Order fire from the Anti-Tank Rifle if needed to help the assault on. This weapon is very good against enemy in slight cover or in buildings or pill boxes. Enemy may mistake it for a small gun and they won't like it.

(iv) **HE MUST READ THE BATTLE** ambitiously and be prepared to go forward and take command if the Platoon Commander becomes a casualty.

(v) He **MUST NOT** go to sleep.

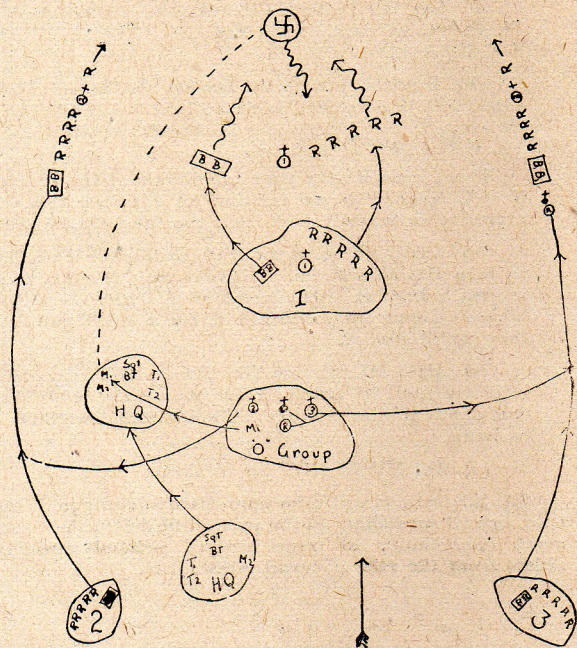
(k) All sections will take immediate advantage of the least sign of weakening on the part of the defence—seizing every opportunity to press forward **without awaiting orders from the rear** (General Alexander).

THE Pincer Movement.

PHASE I.

The Platoon moving across very open country comes under heavy fire. Leading section becomes **FIRE SECTION—Task—FIRE SUPERIORITY**. Mortar helps with H.E. Other two Sections are out of the fire.

Under cover of fire 2 and 3 sections execute a pincer movement. 2 and 3 sections DO NOT split up into groups until compelled to do so by the enemy's fire.



Legend

 FIRE

→ MOVEMENT

MORTAR FIRE

PL. COMD.

SEC. COMD.

8 RIFLEMAN

® RUNNER

M. M₂MORTAR MEN

T₁ T₂ A. TK. MEN.

BREN GROUP

Sq+.PL. SJT.

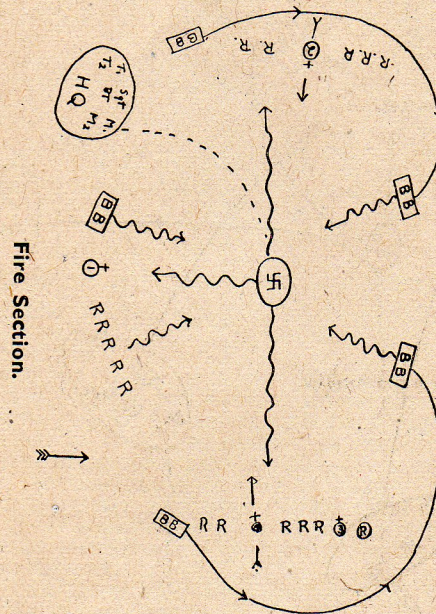
B.T. BATMAN

THE PINCER MOVEMENT.

PHASE II.

Enemy have now spotted the pincers and in spite of heavy fire from the FIRE SECTION and 2-inch MORTAR are still able to bring heavy fire to bear on the pinicing sections. These now split up, sending their BREN GROUPS to take up CUT OFF positions and getting ready to assault themselves. As soon as CUT OFF Gun is in position each section assaults.

Note on Diagram below that the platoon commander **leads and controls** the assault of the section he accompanies.

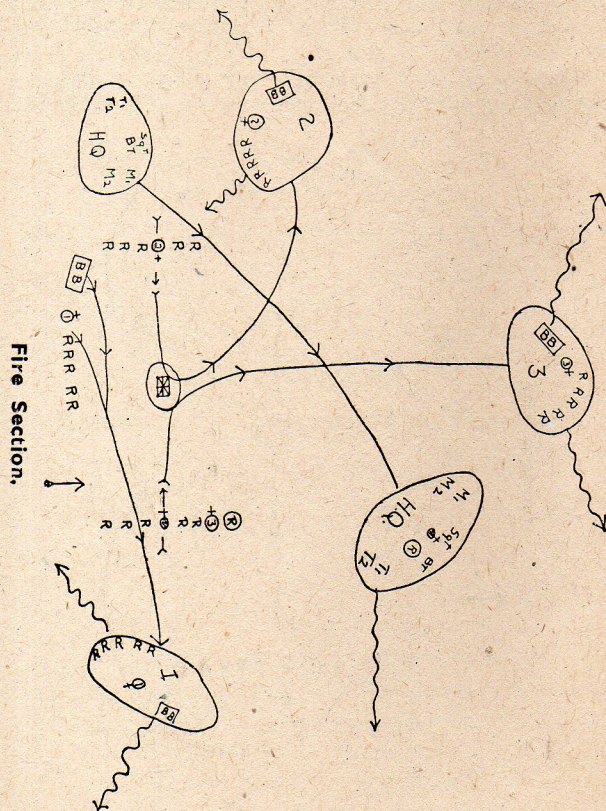


THE PINCER MOVEMENT.

PHASE III. (THE CONSOLIDATION).

All round field of fire if possible 150 yards past the enemy post.

First section in goes straight on. Next in moves to its original flank. Stop section moves up to the remaining flank.



VARIATIONS.

1. The pincer movement is the best theoretical battle plan. Its chief advantages are that if successful it ensures the extermination of the enemy, and prevents his retreat or reinforcement. Bursts of fire from every point of the compass are of intense psychological value and they may, by lowering morale in themselves secure the enemy's surrender or attempted retirement. The disadvantage in practice is the shortage of bayonets in the assault.

2. Even a difficult leg of a pincer which fails by being spotted by the enemy may achieve its object by diverting and holding his attention whilst the other leg is rammed home. **LOOK FOR THE COVERED APPROACH WHICH IS NOT OBVIOUS.** That the obvious covered approach has been appreciated by the enemy as well as you, is a certainty.

3. If a pincer movement is abandoned it will be because only one flank offers any chance of success. The platoon commander will accordingly attack down this flank, his orders being—"left (or right) flanking—follow me."

The **Section** drills are exactly the same as for the pincer movement. These variations—left or right flanking—must be thoroughly practiced. They are just as important as the pincer drill and are more likely to be used in war.

PINCER MOVEMENT BY A COMPANY.

The drills for this (with variations) are precisely similar to those for a platoon. The following points should be noted:—

1. Pincering platoons do not deploy until they have to. When they do, they carry out their normal drills as already described—left or right flanking as the case may be.

2. One platoon in a flanking movement should be given the task of flank protection, the other that of main effort. The flank protection platoon wards off any enemy counter stroke, the main effort delivers the assault.

3. Do not abandon practice of the pincer. It is the best of all training movements—it gives the section leader a command on his own.

4. Frontal Attack. This needs very heavy fire support and a highly organized fire plan. It will usually only be adopted after the defences have been probed by infiltration methods.

PARADE GROUND BATTLE DRILL FOR SECTION INFILTRATION AND ASSAULT.

This DRILL is the modern equivalent of close order drill, which 150 years ago was the way the soldier fought. Every movement represents an action on the battlefield.

N.B.—This drill should be done at the march first and later always at the double. The drill demands individual thinking by each member of the team who may get any job.

<i>By whom word of command given.</i>	<i>Word of Command.</i>	<i>Action taken and by whom.</i>
1. Instructor	"Sec. Comd. fall in your Sec."	Sec. Comd. (S/C) comes to attention, cants his rifle and marches forward.
2. S/C.	"Sec. fall in."	Section comes to attention cant their rifles and fall in on S/C in line. Stand at ease—taking time from S/C ordering arms.
3. Instructor	"Attention."	Sec. attention.
4. Instructor	"As for Battle Drill number. "	Sec. number—S/C No. 1 Bren No. 2 Bren 2 i/c No. 1 Rifleman, No. 1 Bomber, No. 2 Rifleman, etc., as each man numbers he stands at ease.
(Instructor can call out No. 1 Bren (etc.)—the man out moves to end and remainder close up. As in machine gun drill—section re-numbers, each man now has a different job to do).		
5. Instructor	"No. 1 Rifleman (or any member of rifle gp) 'Arrow-head marker.'"	No. 1 Rifleman comes to attn. cants his rifle and marches forward to spot indicated by instructor.

6. Instructor	"In single file get on parade. "	Section taking time from marker ordering arms, can their rifles and fall in, in single file, take up dressing, order arms and stand at ease, each man OBSERVING round to a specified flank at 5 paces interval.
7. Instructor	"Advance."	Sec. advances, in step, having come to attention and canted their rifles, in the left hand.
8. Instructor	"Under fire."	Sec. halt, order arms, stand at ease and shout "DOWN, CRAWL, OBSERVE, FIRE" in a crescendo.
9. Instructor	"S/C left (or right right flanking."	S/C comes to attention.
10. S/C	"Bren gp 600 enemy by lone bush covering fire."	Bren gp come to attention, cant their rifles, move up in line with marker, order arms and stand to attention.
11. S/C	"Rifle gp left flanking."	Rifle gp come to attention, left turn and stand at ease. S/C moves to their head.
12. S/C	"Follow me."	Rifle gp follow S/C to bound, at right angles to original posn., having canted their rifles.
13. S/C	"Rifle gp Halt."	Rifle gp halt, order arms and stand at ease.
14. S/C	"200, covering fire."	Sec. come to attention, right turn and shout, DOWN, CRAWL, OBSERVE, FIRE and remain to attention.
15. 2 i/c	"Bren gp left flanking."	Bren gp turn to left and stand at ease. 2 i/c moves to their head.

16. 2 i/c "Bren gp follow me." Bren gp come to attention, cant their rifles and move around rear of rifle gp to rear of imaginary enemy post (marked on parade ground).
17. 2 i/c "Bren gp Halt." Bren gp halt, order arms and stand at ease.
18. 2 i/c "200 covering fire." Bren gp come up to attention, right turn and shout DOWN, CRAWL, OBSERVE, FIRE and stand to attention.
19. Instructor "S/C prepare to assault." S/C moves to centre of rifle gp.
20. S/C "No. 1 (2 or 3) Rifleman forward." No. 1 Rifleman moves forward.
21. S/C "No. 1 Rifleman halt." No. 1 Rifleman halts.
22. S/C "No. 1 (2 or 3) Bomber forward." No. 1 Bomber moves forward.
23. S/C "No. 1 Bomber halt (forward of Rifleman)." No. 1 Bomber halts.
24. Instructor "S/C assault."
25. S/C "Rifle gp fix." Rifle gp as in close order drill.
26. S/C "Bayonets." Ditto.
27. S/C "Rifle gp on Guard." Rifle gp to on guard posn.
28. S/C "Charge." Rifle gp move forward in line.
29. S/C "From the hip fire."
30. 2 i/c "Bren gp stop." Bren gp stop at once.
31. S/C (When line has passed imaginary post) "Consolidate." Rifle gp right wheel, inside men marking time until whole gp wheel in line again, assuming direction of the original line of advance.

32. S/C "Forward." Rifle gp step out.
33. S/C (When they have passed the Bren gp) "Rifle gp Halt." Rifle gp halt, order arms and stand at ease.
34. 2 i/c "Bren gp Consolidate." Bren gp come to attention, about turn, cant their rifles and move into line with rifle gp.
35. 2 i/c "Bren gp halt." Bren gp halt, order arms and stand at ease.
36. Instructor "Sec. attention—unfix—bayonets attention—stand at ease." Sec. come to attention, unfix and stand at ease.

N.B.—Whenever one gp is giving covering fire, they will stand to attention.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SIDE OF TRAINING. "THE TEAM SPIRIT."

(Developed in a manner which fits in with the men's peacetime preoccupations).

The idea put to each platoon was—"You are a Third Division side trying to work your way up into the First Division." There is as much difference between the performance on the ground of one platoon and another as there is between 11 clerks who have read a book about football and the Arsenal side.

When you get back, give your platoon a name that means something to them, *e.g.*, "Aston Villa" and get other Platoon Commanders to do the same. Have a "league" and some weekly Saturday battle drill competitions. Even a "penny pool" would not come amiss to the men—one platoon against another—refereed by an independent officer over a battle drill exercise course—win, lose or draw points to be awarded (weekly, every Saturday morning).

These "matches" can last quarter of an hour or three hours as opportunity permits, at the will of the referee. The "draw" must take place a week in advance so that the "form" can be studied.

SPECIMENS.

THE BLANKSHIRE BN. BATTLE DRILL LEAGUE.

	Won	Drawn	Lost	Total Points
Arsenal ..	4	1	1	9
Aston Villa	4	1	1	9
Wolves ..	3	2	1	8
Wednesday	3	2	1	8
Chelsea ..	2	3	1	7
	etc., etc.			

1d POOL FORECAST.

DRAW.		Name
Arsenal	v. Aston Villa	J. Smith, Pte.
Wolves	„ Wednesday	
Chelsea	„ Everton	Company "B."
Rangers	„ Charlton	
Fulham	„ Wath	
Cardiff	„ West Ham	

NOTE.—The above covers all 12 Inf Rifle Platoons.

DRILLS FOR VILLAGE FIGHTING AND HOUSE CLEARING.

Principles.

1. Company Commander must sub-divide the village or portion of the village allotted to him into areas which will be the responsibility of separate platoons (see diagram). Leading platoon supplies the STOP and takes the nearest half of the village. Next platoon moves RIGHT, last platoon moves LEFT and supplies the SEAL, *i.e.*, the STOP at the far end of the village. Clearing must NOT commence by any platoon until the SEAL is in position and time must be allowed for this.

2. Killing ground is the main streets. Anyone entering them will be shot.

3. Houses will be cleared from the rear gardens so that any enemy attempting to escape are driven on to the killing ground.

4. Houses will be cleared from the TOP downwards. An enemy driven up higher and higher in a large building may become offensive as he is compressed and concentrated in a better and better fire position. An enemy driven downwards towards the cellars is getting continuously into a worse and worse fire position. He becomes very vulnerable to attack by grenade and will be very likely to surrender or to attempt to escape via the front door.=DEATH.

DRILLS FOR CLEARING A VILLAGE.

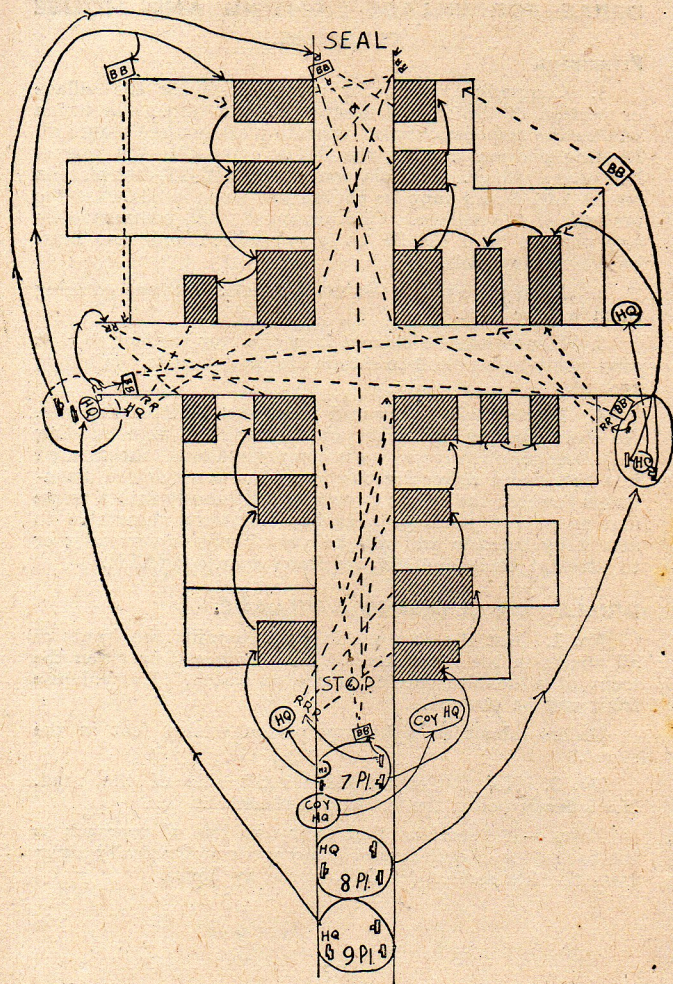
No. 1. Put the stop sec in posn covering the fronts of all houses in the main street. Each man will be given the front of a definite specific house to watch. Every house front will be covered.

Orders—shoot at sight any person setting foot in the street.

No. 2. No. 2 Section clear right side of the road.
No. 3 Section clear the left side of the road.

Notes.—The sections find their own line of approach to the back door of each house. They work methodically away from the fire section (STOP), house by house.

CLEARING A VILLAGE.



No. 3. Platoon H.Q. will be in the area of the fire sec. (STOP). Platoon Commander controls the whole operation from an O.P. near the Fire Section.

No. 4. Success signal, *e.g.*, Verex lights used to indicate final completion of the task and that it is safe for own our troops to enter the main street.

No. 5. Progressive Signals, *e.g.*, a handkerchief on a rifle waved from a front window—indicates "I have cleared as far as here" to the fire section.

This signal is necessary if the main road includes curves. Curves in the road makes it impossible for the fire section to cover the fronts of all houses in the village from the beginning. The fire section must in such a case cover as far down as the first bend from their first position, moving forward from bend to bend as each group of houses is signalled clear by the searching sections on both sides of the road.

DRILLS FOR CLEARING A HOUSE.

(N.B.—These also apply to the actual buildings of isolated farms and farm building groups—see drill for clearing a wood or isolated cover).

No. 1. Divide section into :—

1. Clearing group.

2. Covering group.

Clearing Group.—Sec. Comd. and 3 men (1 Bomber under 2 doormen.

Covering Group.—Remainder under 2 i/c Section.

No. 2. Covering group take up positions covering ALL windows, doors or openings which command the line of approach of the clearing party **to the back door** of the house.

No. 3. Doormen approach the door covered by the Sec. Comd. (with Tommy Gun) and the covering group.

No. 4. Left and right doormen kneel beside the door and open the latch with their bayonets, flinging the door wide open. During this operation the doormen keep their rifles on the outside of the body and have their fingers on the trigger. A doorman flings a grenade into the house if ordered to do so by the section commander.

NOTE.—All the clearing gp carry as many grenades as can be spared.

No. 5. Sec. Comd. dashes in, followed closely by:—

1. Bomber.
2. Left doorman.
3. Right doorman.

(a) **The right doorman** glues his back to the hall wall near the door.

Task. To cover the rear of the clearing party and prevent the free movement of the enemy downstairs, also to cover the cellar head.

(b) **Remainder.** Go straight to the top of the house and clear it, working downwards from the roof (which must be searched) towards the cellars.

NOTES.

1. Don't get too grenade minded. It is very easy to get windy on this operation and fling grenades into every house or room for the sake of flinging them. They will soon run out and will not be available when really necessary.

2. **SHOOT TO KILL. YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO TAKE CHANCES IN THIS SORT OF OPERATION.**

3. Shooting through the walls of wooden buildings is useful but thorough personal search must follow it.

4. Search the front gardens of each house from the front upper windows before passing to the next house.

5. Don't worry about booby traps. A defended village (as distinct from an abandoned village) is unlikely to be booby-trapped. If it is you are not likely to find the traps—it takes an expert. So go right ahead and take risks—until something happens.

DRILL FOR CLEARING A WOOD OR ISOLATED COVER.

Bodies of the enemy (particularly, though not only, airborne troops or parachutists) may lurk in woods or similar isolated cover or in groups of buildings, *e.g.*, farms, at any stage of a battle. These conditions occur both on the offensive and the defensive.

The main purpose of such an enemy is to HIDE. He is seeking to avoid capture, or is re-organizing and waiting until he is ready to come out and attack (*e.g.*, under cover of darkness). The very fact that the enemy is lying up in woods, shows that he is not aggressively minded **at the moment**

as it is obviously unlikely that he can find any offensive fire positions in such a place. His morale is probably low and it will fall rapidly to zero if he is attacked quickly, resolutely and methodically. His reaction when attacked will be to hide more carefully, in order to avoid capture and to surrender when he finds himself cornered in a hopeless position. His morale will, on the other hand, rise rapidly if time is allowed to run on, if the search is perfunctory and careless, or if he finds himself able to organize into little offensive groups behind a thin line of beaters who, having made a perfunctory search, have gone merrily on.

Whether O Germans or O Englishmen emerge from any wood alive therefore depends on two things—the SPEED and THOROUGHNESS of the search.

The best way to teach a platoon of untrained students the real necessity for a drill in this operation is to take them to a fairly thick wood, in which about 10 "enemy" have been placed and tell them to clear it using their own methods. You will find no difficulty in producing at least 5 live enemy out of the wood after they purport to have finished. After this demonstration they will be very ready to adopt drill methods.

The following drill only applies in its entirety to woods and isolated cover of that type. When the enemy is concealed in isolated farms or similar buildings, the drill remains the same, except that the method of clearing the actual buildings is as laid down in Drill for Village Fighting and not as set out below.

This drill can, of course, be applied to larger formations than the platoon. The best way to learn it, is with an imaginary wood of sticks on the parade ground. Don't leave the parade ground to tackle a real wood until every man knows every one of the different jobs he may be called upon to do.

Principles..

1. **SPEED.**—Circle the wood with fire IMMEDIATELY. Tie the enemy up in the bag so that escape is impossible, Bren Gps are best for this job.

2. **THOROUGHNESS.**—If the wood is very thick, about 5 yards per man is all that can be tackled, and this will force you to drive the wood down its length, not its

breadth. If the wood is too wide for your platoon—if it has no length—ask for a larger force. It is no use playing at doing this job—you will fail and you may not come out alive.

3. DRIVE THE ENEMY TOWARDS HIS LIKELY OBJECTIVE OR GOAL, if you can. This is always easier than driving him away from it.

4. DRIVE THE ENEMY TOWARDS A GOOD KILLING GROUND, if you can.

5. MOBILE RESERVE, must be kept to wipe out any enemy who escape the net.

Principles 2, 3 and 4 may be mutually conflicting. If the wood is very long and narrow, and you have no more men available, you can beat only lengthwise, however undesirable this is. Again, the good killing ground may be at one end of the wood and the enemy objective at the other. All these factors must be weighed up in a lightning appreciation and the best solution picked out.

The drills for the operation are as follows :—

DRILLS FOR THE PLATOON COMMANDER.

Drill No. 1. **Find a good O.P.** Go to it and make—

Drill No. 2. **A lightning appreciation**—(as above) deciding—

(1) The Killing Ground.

(2) The way you are going to beat the wood after weighing all the conflicting factors.

Drill No. 3. **Place stops in position.**

(a) Use 3 Bren Gps if all are needed.

(b) Circle the wood with fire.

ORDERS—KILL ANYONE SHOWING HIS NOSE OUTSIDE THE WOOD.

(c) Do this first—before sending for the “O” Gp. (Separate orders to the Bren Gps).

Drill No. 4. **Send for O. Gp.**

Drill No. 5. **Detail beaters.**

(a) Normal Platoon—thick wood—can find about 10—never stint the beaters. If cutting down on numbers cut down on something else.

(b) Give them all the Tommy guns.

Drill No. 6. **Detail support Gps.**

(a) Have N.C.Os. here commanding each group if you can.

(b) Give each group a name or number to avoid confusion when they are called for in the wood.

Drill No. 7. **Detail Mobile Reserve and its position.**

(a) On a road or track if you can.

(b) Between the enemy and his objective.

(c) Usually best to include the Pl. Sgt. and A.Tk. Rifle in this Group.

Drill No. 8. **Give Platoon R.V. at end of orders.**

NOTE.—Platoon Commander **ALWAYS** commands the beaters personally.

DRILLS FOR THE BEATERS.

Drill No. 1.—Form up in organized start line parallel to the edge of the wood pre-selected as the point of entry. **WAIT UNTIL THE STOPS ARE IN POSITION.**

Drill No. 2.—Beaters line must stretch from edge to edge of the wood, and the entry must be made in an organized line.

Drill No. 3.—Speed through the wood is **AT THE PACE OF THE SLOWEST—DON'T HURRY—THOROUGH SEARCH OF EVERY INCH IS VITAL.**

Drill No. 4.—When any part of the line of beaters encounters trouble—all beaters get down in line in cover and **FIRE** in the general direction of the opposition, whether they can see a target or not.

Drill No. 5. All beaters **observe** to their front and search to their front carefully. **DON'T USE EASY ROUTES—GO STRAIGHT THROUGH** thickets. Fire into thickets or likely hiding places.

Drill No. 6.—Halt at the end of the wood and wait success signal. **You will be shot if you don't.** (THIS DRILL APPLIES TO ALL).

Drill No. 7.—Pl. Commander goes with the beaters.

DRILLS FOR THE SUPPORT GROUPS.

No. 1.—Keep close enough to be in contact with beaters.

No. 2.—Move forward and through the line of beaters to deal with any opposition when called for. It is the beaters' job to contain the enemy and kill him by fire. Your job is to **KILL** him if they fail.

No. 3.—Watch trees above heads of beaters, that is your field of observation until you are called for. A tree top is a very good hiding-place for an enemy who wishes to avoid capture.

CLEARING A WOOD OR ISOLATED COVER.

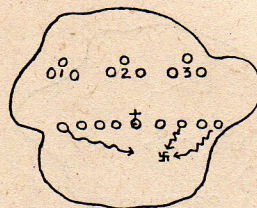
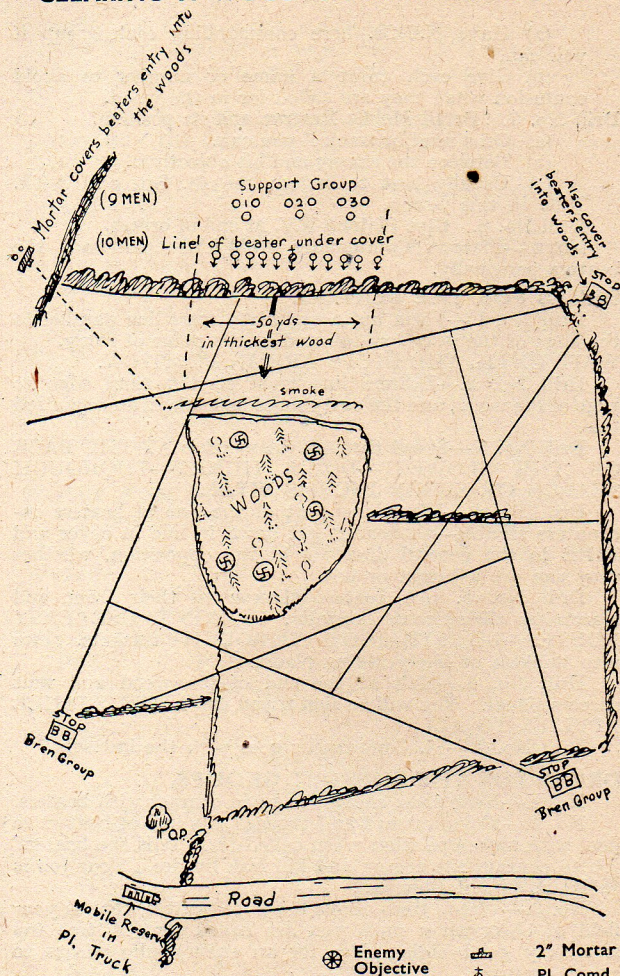


Fig. No. 1.—Beater locates the enemy. He fires, calls "Beaters down" and "Three support group"—All beaters get down in line and FIRE.

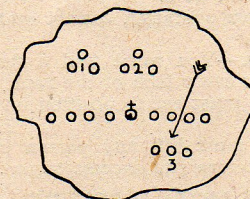


Fig. No. 2.—Beater indicates approximate location of enemy to support group. They go in with bayonet, ready to fire from the hip and liquidate the enemy.

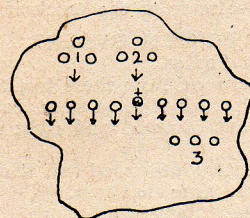


Fig. No. 3.—Support group shouts "All clear" and gets down. Pl. Commander orders "Forward." All move forward except No. 3 support group, who wait until the line of beaters is past them.

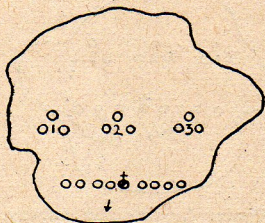


Fig. No. 4.—All have resumed original positions and the advance is continuing.

DRILL FOR THE STOPS.

1. **Speed.**—Whole operation cannot start until you are in position.
2. **Fire position.**—You must find a fire position from which you can cover every inch of the flank detailed to you.
3. **Cover.**—You must get to position unseen and **remain unseen.**
4. **Task.**—You must **kill any person** putting his nose outside the wood before the success signal.

DRILLS FOR THE MOBILE RESERVE.

1. Use the Platoon truck and stay on it.
2. Find a good O.P. and read the battle continuously, *e.g.*, one man up a nearby tree.
3. Kill any enemy who may escape trying to keep between them and their objective.
4. Take risks.—Fire from the truck if need be.

SPECIMEN ORDERS.

To the Three Bren Groups.

"I shall beat the wood from there to there."

No. 1.—Cover left flank of wood from that hedge.

No. 2.—Cover front of wood and right flank from that bank.

No. 3.—Cover beaters into wood and then cover the rear of the wood from area near that tree.

R.V.—That house. Signals as usual. Any questions? **MOVE.**

To the "O" Group (Pl. Sgt., 1 of Mortars plus 3 Sec. Comds).

"I shall beat the wood from there to there."

The three stops are in those positions (1, 2, 3).

Beaters—remainder of 1 and 2 sections.

Support Gps—3 Section will provide two groups.

Mobile Reserve—Pl. Sgt., A/Tk. Rifle team, and Batman in the truck down that track.

Mortar—Prepare to cover edge of wood with smoke on signal—2 whistle blasts. I shall only signal if my entry into the wood is opposed. I will be with the beaters.

R.V.—That house—Signals as usual. Any questions? **MOVE.**

DRILL FOR CROSSING A DEFENDED RIVER USING RECCE AND ASSAULT BOATS.

Principles.

- (a) **SPEED.**
- (b) **SURPRISE.**
- (c) **CAREFUL PREPARATION.**
- (d) **COMPLETE SILENCE.**

DRILL No. 1.—RECONNAISSANCE.

- (a) Before getting to the water.
- (b) On arrival at water's edge.

Points to note at (a) :—

1. A careful study of the map.
2. A careful study of air photos.
3. A careful study of reconnaissance reports.
4. Study of information from forward patrols.
5. Questioning of local inhabitants.

Issue warning order to platoon, and make one section responsible for loading and off loading boats, and then go forward to do recce.

N.B.—The recce boat **MUST** be inflated immediately on reaching off loading point.

Points to note at (b) :—

1. Width of the river.
2. Strength of the current.
3. Slopes of both banks.
4. Obstacles on both banks.
5. Study of far ground to select suitable objectives for sections.

DRILL No. 2. CALL UP "O" GROUP (consisting of Pl. Sgt, 3 Sec. Comds. and No. 1 on the Mortar.

Orders as follows:—

Enemy holding that ridge (point).

9 Pl is on your left, 7 Pl is on our right.

We, 8 Pl. WILL cross from here to there (point).

No. 1 Sec. covering Section.

No. 2 Sec. Boat erecting Section.

No. 3 Sec. Local protection.

Boat erecting point (B.E.P.), 50 yds in rear by that small bush.

Mortar Fire—3 rds H.E. by observation on copse if called for. (Both of these only if crossing is spotted by the enemy and opposed).

Consolidate on line of trees 100 yds past objective.

Boat loads and signals as usual.

Any questions? Get cracking.

N.B.—The Sec. detailed for boat erecting will detail 4 men ONLY to erect the boat at the B.E.P.—2 men for the recce boat and 2 ferrymen.

DRILL No. 3.

The **RECCE MEN** with their boat, move down in rear of the covering sec. to the Pl Comd and move across the river under Pl Comd's orders. On the recce men signalling the O.K. (tugging a rope at night) the assault boat starts the first trip.

N.B.—The recce men's job is to see that the landing point selected by the Pl. Comd. is suitable. They will not be needed if the river is so narrow that the Pl. Comd. can see all he needs to see from the opposite bank.

DRILL No. 4.

BOAT LOADS. The Pl. Sgt. is the key man for this drill. He is on the bank at the embarking point with a list of the men for each boat load. He organizes and checks each party in advance and pushes out each boat.

Recce Boat. Nos. 6 and 7 of No. 2 Sec. (Boat erecting Sec.).

1st trip of the Assault Boat.

Pl. Comd.

Pl. Comd's runner.

No. 2 Sec. Comd.

" " No. 1.

" " No. 2.

" " No. 3.

" " No. 4.

" " No. 5.

No. 1 " No. 3.

2nd trip of the Assault Boat.

No. 3 Sec. Comd.

" " No. 1.

" " No. 2.

" " No. 4.

" " No. 5.

" " No. 6.

" " No. 7.

(and the 2 ferrymen).

SEATS IN BOATS ARE AS SHOWN ON DIAGRAM —
Page 80.

3rd trip of the Assault Boat.

Pl. Comd's. Batman.

A. Tk. Rifleman No. 1.

" " No. 2.

Mortar Man No. 1.

" " No. 2.

No. 3 Sec. No. 3.

" " No. 4.

(and the 2 ferrymen).

4th trip of the Assault Boat.

Pl. Sgt.

No. 1 Sec. Comd.

" " No. 1.

" " No. 2.

" " No. 5.

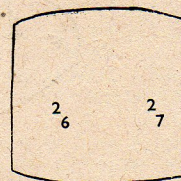
" " No. 6.

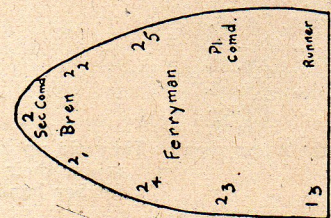
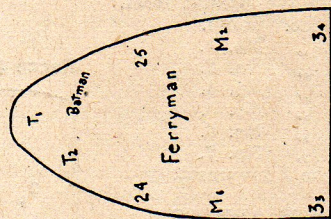
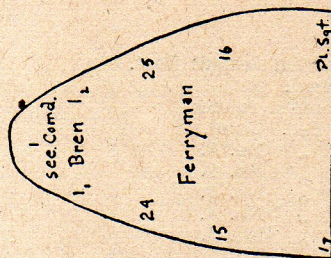
" " No. 7.

(and the 2 ferrymen).

They tie up the boat and rejoin their sec. on the farther bank.

Recce Boat Party





DRILL No. 5. ON ARRIVAL ON THE FAR BANK.

No. 2 Sec. (first to cross) go straight ahead.

No. 3 Sec. (second to cross) go right.

No. 1 Sec. (last to cross) go left.

Pl. H.Q. (Unless otherwise directed by the Pl. Comd.) move to a suitable posn. in rear of No. 2 Section.

Points to Note:—

(i) Fire and movement MUST be used by secs., i.e., always at least one leg on the ground (this applies to the move of the covering sec. to the river bank).

(ii) This drill will often be carried out at night. Hence the importance of everyone knowing his boat and his seat in the boat.

(iii) **CUT OUT TALKING.** Drill will be practised on the parade ground with no boats and a river marked by tapes. On the last run through the drill and on the actual crossing, NO TALKING will be allowed by anyone. They will all know where they have to go and will need no further verbal orders.

In actual war the Pl. Comd. will probably have a long period whilst he is waiting for the boats to come up. He must use some of this time to go through a complete rehearsal of the DRILL on a taped out river so that talking and verbal orders can be actually cut out. He can then incorporate any slight variations of seating necessitated by circumstances.

(iv) Battle Drill is based on the minimum allocation of one boat per platoon. Variation if two boats supplied—simple—two crossing places and two boat-loads only for each boat instead of four.

(v) Note the seating positions in the boat. The sec. leader with his Tommy Gun and the No. 1 and 2 on the Bren (50% of the fire power) are in the nose of the boat ready to cover the landing of the remainder. All men must be trained to have their rifles ready during the crossing and to fire from the boat when necessary (not at night).

(vi) We cannot get too much practice at this drill. When offensive action comes all bridges will be destroyed, and rapid orderly river crossings will be a vital part of every day routine action. Boating is not a strange freak drill to be practised once a year, it is a regular part of the curriculum.

DRILL FOR NIGHT PATROLS.

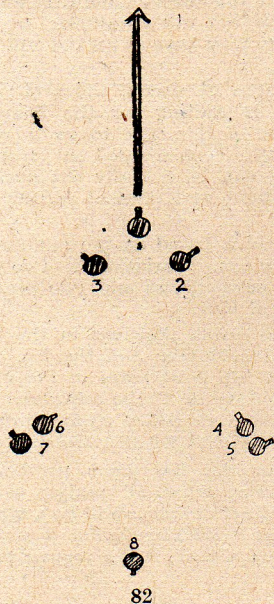
Principles.

1. **FIELD CRAFT.** Much practice in daylight necessary before ability to move at night acquired.
2. **KEEPING DIRECTION.** Picking out landmarks by day and careful day recce by observation invaluable aids.
3. New and most important use—**finding enemy tanks** in night harbours and destroying them whilst at rest.
4. **REHEARSAL IN DAYLIGHT**—essential.

(See Diagram).

NIGHT PATROLS. (In Open Country).

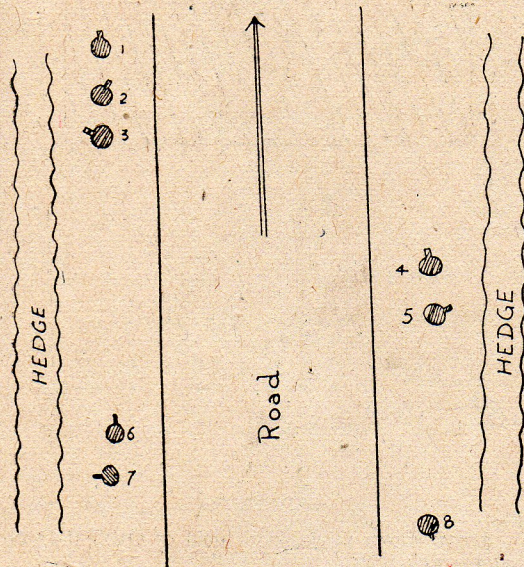
DIRECTION OF ADVANCE.



NIGHT PATROLS.

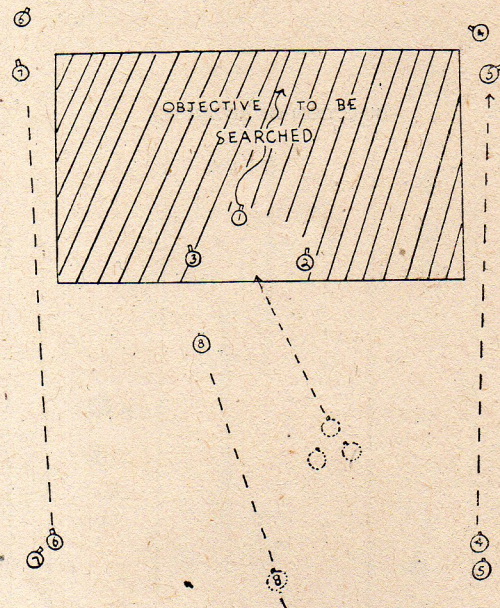
(Advancing Along a Road).

DIRECTION OF ADVANCE.



NIGHT PATROLS.

(Searching a House, Hut or Small Enclosure).



Notes:—

- (i) Arrow shows direction of field of OBSERVATION allocated to each man.
- (ii) Men in each group must be within touching distance of each other.
- (iii) Distance between each group will depend on VISIBILITY.
- (iv) Extra men will move in the centre of the group.
- (v) It is suggested that a recce patrol of three men should always be sent out in the middle of a larger fighting patrol.

They can be detached near the objective and they will then have the chance of getting immediate support if they are discovered.

(vi) **WIRE.** Get **under** it on your back using both hands to raise it above your head.

(vii) Don't wear steel helmet or respirator. Wear what you like and carry any weapon you feel confident of using.

(viii) **GATES AND FENCES.** Roll round the edges or over the top. Don't expose yourself in the gap or on the top.



(The above diagram illustrates two methods of crossing a gap).

(ix) All whispering and talking barred, frequent LISTENING for long periods flat on the ground essential. When leader stops to listen and lies flat, all must follow INSTANTLY. Listen with the head cocked and the mouth open. This requires much careful training, practice, and rehearsal.

(x) **Signals.** These must be non-human noises, *e.g.*, scratching of gaiters.

(xi) **Enemy Verrey Light.** Remain still if caught upright and you can't get flat before it bursts.

(xii) **Crossing a gap,** if in close contact, must be done only one man at a time. PATROL MUST WAIT and form up again on the other side of the gap. This takes considerable time, but it is the only way of keeping the patrol together. Last man through gives a noise signal to the patrol leader as soon as he is through.

NIGHT PATROL—(SEARCHING A HOUSE, HUT OR SMALL WOOD).

The best way to learn patrolling, is to play games—the following two are suggested:—

(a) Part of the platoon is hidden in a wood. Remainder are sent out to investigate an area of which the wood forms part and bring back information as to whether it is held by the enemy. Enemy makes slight noises to help in the early stages.

(b) (better). Part of the platoon (the toughs) are organised as enemy in an area. Remainder as a Patrol

are sent out to capture two prisoners and are not to return until they do. This game is rough but refreshing. Troops will cheerfully play it all night. A Night River Crossing can be included.

(c) Arrange frequent tests in which the platoon listens to typical military night noises at varying distances and has to identify them and estimate the distances they are away, *e.g.*, digging at 300 yards, coughing at 150 yards, sentry moving at 150 yards.

TANK TRAPS AND TANK HUNTING.

NOTE.—These drills are still very embryo and probably capable of much improvement. They have been evolved as the result of trial and error.

1. Carefully distinguish in your own mind between a "tank or road block" and a "tank trap." There is still a lot of confusion in many people's mind about these two totally different objects.

2. The first (which is by far the most common) is an erection usually of a permanent or semi-permanent nature, (*e.g.*, rails slotted into the road) put up as part of a system where the **primary object is to deny tanks** (or wheeled vehicles) **the use of certain roads** or approaches (*e.g.*, as part of the perimeter defences of a nodal point). You succeed in this object if tanks approach, see the blocks, and then turn away, though, of course, it would be very nice to destroy or damage some if you can.

These road blocks are referred to in "Isolated Defence," and they do not present any very different problems from the problems of defence itself.

3. The second—the tank trap—is an erection usually of a mobile or fairly mobile nature (*e.g.*, a strip of anti-tank mines sewn up in sacking which can be pulled rapidly across a road), where the **primary object is to destroy tanks**. You do not now succeed in your object if the tanks approach, see your little game, and turn aside.

We propose here to discuss the "tank trap"—seeing it in its proper place as part of that much greater problem—the correct action of infantry against enemy tanks.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES—INFANTRY versus TANKS.

1. When infantry are attacked by enemy tanks their primary duty is NOT to destroy the tanks. It is to make quite sure that no enemy infantry following up the tanks, are allowed to exploit the success that the tanks have achieved. The tanks themselves **will be dealt with by our own tanks and anti-tank guns**, which are held in reserve, well back, ready to rush as a concentrated mobile force to the scene of any such enemy break through.

Nothing must be allowed to obscure this fundamental principle. If infantry very gallantly, but foolishly, allow themselves to be drawn off into tank pursuit, they will simply be playing right into the enemy's hands; they will leave the way open for his infantry.

2. It may therefore be necessary in extreme cases, where enemy infantry are seen to be following up tanks at very close quarters, **to permit the tanks to go on unmolested**, relying entirely on concealment, and doing nothing to disclose your positions. Remember that tanks are very blind and can see very little of concealed infantry, particularly when at close quarters.

As soon as the tanks have passed over, your work begins. You must pop up instantly and wipe out the enemy infantry. The battle will have become so confused by this time that it is doubtful if the enemy tanks will now be able to turn round and render any effective aid to their own infantry. They will certainly not be able to do so if they are harassed at this stage **as a drill** by the reserve units of your own force.

RULES OF CONDUCT—Infantry versus tanks.

Following the above principles, we get the four following rules of conduct:—

(A). **Offensive Action against unsupported Tanks.**—All infantry must act as offensively as possible towards any tanks which they see are not supported by enemy infantry—harassing, if they cannot destroy.

(B). **Passive Action against closely supported tanks.**—Tanks which are closely supported by enemy infantry must be left severely alone—ignored by the most forward troops. They will be dealt with by reserve infantry or special formations (see below), whose task is to prevent the tanks from turning round and interfering in the front line infantry fighting.

(C). **Permanent Offensive Action by organized units.**—Although all infantry must therefore understand how to attack and destroy tanks, it will always be worth while to organise special bodies within each force (e.g., the reserve platoon in each company) as special tank hunting and tank trapping units. They should hold most of the anti-tank equipment of the company, pooled so that if the situation is such that they can be spared (e.g., possibly certain reserve platoons of reserve battalions) they can go out as little striking forces **to hunt any tanks** which have penetrated the front and are separated from their own infantry by our own forward infantry fire power.

(D). **Permanent Offensive Action against All Tanks at Night.**—Tanks are always extremely vulnerable by night when at rest at night harbours. The crews are small and very badly need rest. They cannot operate their tanks at night if the country is even slightly enclosed, and if they try to do so they will make so much noise and go so slowly that they will fall an easy prey to any infantry trained to take them on. Therefore, **as a drill**, all infantry who can possibly be spared, must be out hunting tanks by night wherever they can be found. **It is obviously more easy to do this if the tanks have been separated from their own infantry by day so that they cannot harbour in the midst of infantry localities.**

THE DRILLS FOR EACH OF THE ABOVE RULES OF CONDUCT IN DETAIL are:—

(A). HARASSING AND DESTRUCTION OF UNSUPPORTED TANKS, by all INFANTRY.

1. **Fire.**—Even small arms fire is worth while. It will force the crew to close down, make them slow down and proceed with caution. They must not be allowed to "Lord it"—develop a superiority complex. But do not fire if you are in the front line and by so doing you will give away your positions to closely following enemy infantry.

2. **Special Weapons.**—The anti-tank rifle, the 68 grenade, the sticky bomb, and the anti-tank mine and mine-grenade are all most useful, particularly when used in conjunction with smoke (see below).

3. **Smoke.**—This is the best weapon of all. The ordinary small size training smoke generator is an ideal weapon. It is light, easy to carry and can be thrown a considerable

distance. Under cover of the smoke (one bomb lasts 2½ minutes), infantry can get to really close quarters and swarm all over the tanks with ease in almost complete safety.

The correct use of these smoke bombs requires considerable practice. They must be used to blanket the tank tactics of mutual support—to isolate tank from tank. This can only be done by good **team work**. The best system is "one section—one tank," but it is only first-class support mutual drill between sections which can break down tank mutual support.

With practice smoke bombs can easily be lobbed right on to the tanks. If they land so that smoke is drawn into the tank through the air inlet, they have a very great and immediate moral effect. They also have very often a very valuable immediate physical effect—for the whole of the tank crew may be sick (this happens very often) and their efficiency in all respects will then be temporarily much impaired.

These tactics can quite easily be practised using Bren Gun carriers (geared down in speed) as tanks, but it is very desirable that all infantry should have practice with real tanks so that they can see for themselves that the drills really work. What is needed on training is not big scale tank battles, but platoon exercises against tank troops. Men will only appreciate by personal experience that they are in fact safer when three feet from a tank than they would be at 50 yards.

(B). IGNORING TANKS WHICH ARE CLOSELY SUPPORTED BY ENEMY INFANTRY.

Here again practice with actual tanks over-running infantry positions is essential, the tanks firing blank when they see movement or discover a post. Once the infantry get it into their heads that they can easily escape detection by staying still, their determination to stay in their posts and to overcome the dangerous impulse to get up and run back will increase enormously. They will also be further fortified by **accurate knowledge of the general drill**—i.e., that the tanks will be dealt with by other units who are waiting eagerly at the back to take them on. Let the men in the front line turn round and see tanks dealt with. The forwards will soon appreciate that this job is one for the full backs and they will not then allow themselves to be put off their own game by enemy rush tactics. But the forwards must

know that the backs are there, that they have been trained to do their job, and that they know how to play the game.

(C). **DESTRUCTION AND TRAPPING OF TANKS BY SPECIALLY ORGANISED UNITS.**

(i) **Organization of the Unit.**

All weapons used will be as set out in "A"—fire, special weapons and smoke. The methods of actual destruction will also be precisely similar.

(ii) **Pooling.**

The pooling of most special weapons under a special unit has been found much more effective than a policy of complete dispersal. In complete dispersal no one has enough of anything to be really adequate.

(iii) **Mobility.**

Such a special unit may be sent out on a special mission to hunt out, trap and destroy tanks known to be separated from infantry. To carry out this mission it will obviously be a great advantage if the unit can be made as MOBILE as possible (*e.g.*, the allotment of an extra truck or trucks temporarily or the training and use of a portion of the carrier platoon for this special role).

(iv) **Operational Drills.**

There are NINE drills for such a special tank-hunting unit to practise:—

1. **Recce Unit.**—The platoon sergeant with one good man from each Sec. **TASK**—to go off to a point indicated by the unit commander to prepare the NEXT trap. They must have this all prepared in detail ready for immediate use by the unit so that it can keep moving from trap to trap.

2. **Establish a first-class O.P.**—Early, accurate warning, information of the number of tanks approaching, and the direction of their advance is essential to complete planned success. (**WHISTLE SIGNAL**).

3. **Find a site for your MAIN BLOCK**, where the greatest possible **SURPRISE** will be achieved, *e.g.*, let the tanks first sight it when they round a bend.

(NOTE.—This is unnecessary if the main block is mobile—pulled across the road in front of the tanks).

4. **Decide on the CHECKING POINTS.**—These are the places where the three tanks of the sec. will slow down or halt when the leader first sights the **MAIN BLOCK**. These positions can easily be worked out with practice, using various types of blocks. For instance, if the **MAIN BLOCK**

is obvious (timber or carts), the **CHECKING POINT** of the leading tank will be right on the bend in the road where it first sights the block. If the road is straight and a mobile strip of anti-tank mines is used as the **MAIN BLOCK** (pulled across the road just in front of the leading tank), the leading tank itself (damaged or destroyed) will form the **MAIN BLOCK**.

5. **Site the SEAL.**—This is another mobile block, preferably of anti-tank mines (wire is a very poor substitute) pulled across behind the third tank or such later tank (depending on circumstances) as the size of your force (one section—one tank) will allow you to deal with.

6. **Site the ANTI-TANK RIFLE or GUN (if you have one).**—Get a central position allowing a shoot at all three tanks if you can. Get a short range enfilade shoot if you can, and keep the weapon well away from the area of the blocks themselves, as these are certain to be raked by enemy fire.

7. **Allot positions to the garrison:—**

(a) **One section—one tank** is the proper team. Each team as near as possible to the estimated **CHECKING POINT** of the tank allotted to it for destruction (when well trained these sections will await their tank with the precision and aplomb of a group of railway porters awaiting the arrival of the 6-30 at Victoria).

(b) **Good cover.**—Explore all cover from holes in the ground to tops of trees (good). Remember the tank habit of raking suspicious road verges with fire.

(c) **Same Side of Road.**—Put all garrisons on the same side of the road. This will assist in mutual safety of your own troops and in rigid unobserved withdrawal down a previously reconnoitred route.

8. **Decide policy towards enemy M/C scouts and issue orders about it:—**

(a) If both **MAIN BLOCK** and **SEAL** are **MOBILE** it is best to let the scouts through unmolested. Only open fire on them if they see you and attempt to return with the news (this should never happen, if you have done your job properly).

(b) If the only **MAIN BLOCK** available is so immobile that you cannot possibly get it into position in the time between the passing of the enemy M/C scouts and the approach of the leading tank, you must arrange to exterminate ALL the scouts quickly, or the tanks will never walk into your trap. This can only be done by

siting Tommy guns and Bren guns with the task of killing the scouts as they **approach** the CHECKING POINT—killing the rearmost scout first. Alternatively, the scouts can be dealt with by ropes pulled quickly across the road in front of them at saddle height.

In either case **NO scout must be allowed to return with the news or to litter the road** or the cat will be out of the bag and the tanks will by-pass your trap.

You will only be able to deal with enemy M/C scouts satisfactorily by the second method if you have the advantage of a very winding road so that you can carry on out of sight of the enemy leading tank. Much will also hang on the distance between the rearmost scout and the leading tank—if this is slight you will have very little time in which to liquidate the M/C scouts and clear them out of the way.

Although **this Drill** is difficult, it can be carried out with practice and good teamwork.

Drill (a) is, of course, much easier to learn and to put into practice.

9. Rendezvous (R.V.).

This must be given out in the original orders. It is the place where the truck or trucks have been left—the place to which all sections will **RUN** as the engagement is over (successful or not). A quick getaway and a move into the new site already reconnoitred for immediate occupation further down the road (see Drill No. 1) is part of the essence of this type of fighting.

Here again the advantages of **all on one side of the road** (concealed withdrawal down previously reconnoitred route) and **pooled equipment** (enabling an immediate move to another position with sufficient gear to set a further trap) are at once apparent.

(D.) DESTRUCTION OF TANKS BY NIGHT OR IN NIGHT HARBOUR.

Towards evening it can be safely assumed that any tanks about are looking out for their night harbour positions. As they are rather touchy about these, they will probably halt fairly frequently to examine suitable spots. Great risks can, and must, be taken in trailing them at this stage.

THE DRILLS ARE AS FOLLOWS:—

1. **Organize LIGHT Section.**—A foot patrol of very fit men, very lightly armed and equipped, standing by ready to move instantly. **TASK**—to keep contact. It has been

found that, particularly in the dusk, such a patrol aided by the noise tanks must make, can keep contact without being seen both on roads (difficult) and across country (very easily).

Send the bicycle, with this foot patrol following them, on roads and tracks as near to them as possible. **TASK**—to act as a LINK with the rest of the platoon, if contact is ever difficult to maintain.

By day the **LIGHT** section can help to keep contact with the remainder by the use of conspicuous chalk marks on roads or walls. Remember that the hunt will not be very long. It will certainly terminate as darkness approaches.

2. **Organize MOBILE Sections.**—Remaining secs. in two 15-cwt. trucks or one 30-cwt. If no extra vehicle can be spared one section will have to march. The mobile section follow the light section and the link at a discreet distance. (Tanks make so much noise and are so blind on occasions that they have failed to hear or observe a 30-cwt. truck following them at 50 yards).

3. **Organize CHANGE-OVER.**—On a long hunt the light section will soon tire. If the tanks halt temporarily at a spot where it is not deemed advisable to attack them by day, use the opportunity to change-over the light sections with one of the mobile sections.

4.—Organize DESTRUCTION.

Remember that:—

(a) In many types of tank the crews have to get out to sleep; in all types they prefer to do so.

(b) Tanks nearly always do their daily maintenance in the evening before the crews sleep. They are vulnerable during this period.

(c) The Germans provide relief crews, maintenance crews, guards and petrol refuelling vehicles in their Panzer divisions. These all come up at dusk in convoy. Best results will be obtained if other special tank-hunting units are assigned the task of dealing with these convoys and preventing them from reaching the forward tanks.

(d) Tank guards will be fairly sparse and unless the discipline is exceptionally high, there will nearly always be some noise in a tank park. You are the master of the situation and if you use reasonable fieldcraft skill you cannot fail to cause great confusion and to inflict heavy casualties on the enemy.

(e) The best formation is one section—one tank each, going on from tank to tank until the opposition becomes too hot. Within the section choose the most experienced fieldcraft man (if you have a really good one) and send him forward to strangle or knife the sentry before you attack. Tell off one or two of the section to deal with any members of the crew who may be sleeping outside the tank and to cover the remainder who are the destroying party. A single Verey Light fired at the original onset may help you and will probably be essential as a signal to co-ordinate the attack. Any further lights fired will help the defenders more than you.

(f) R.V. at the close of operations and a quick organized, previously planned get-away are again an essential part of this drill.

BATTLE DRILL AS THE ONLY ANSWER TO PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE.

It is a fact that our troops have not stood up to the enemy "Blitz" Tactics in this war as well as they did in the last. This is not due to lack of courage—they have plenty—but to IGNORANCE.

In the last war our troops had plenty of time to get inoculated to the horrors of war by gradually working up from quiet to busy sectors; in this war they pass from all-out peace to all-out war—overnight.

As a result, it has been authoritatively stated that our troops in Crete did not stand up to the bombing as well as the citizens of London did; this is quite natural if you think it out.

We must overcome this difficulty. The German is a clever PSYCHOLOGIST. Dive bombing, screaming bombs, isolated machine-gun fire from the rear, encirclement, even to some extent tanks—are all examples of his attempts to take positions, BY MAKING THE ENEMY THINK HE IS BEATEN. If you think you are finished—you are finished.

The Germans in the Battle of France even flew training planes in mock dive bombing attacks in order to maintain the impression that "The sky was black with enemy aircraft."

This enemy policy has been highly successful. So successful that France went down with less than half the casualties she suffered in any one major battle of the last war, leaving nearly 2,000,000 unwounded prisoners in German hands.

Actual examples of failure in battle discipline are:—

1. **Our troops giving up positions because of dive-bombing.** Actual casualties negligible. Noise, uproar and terror effect tremendous.

Dive bombing is very inaccurate and light when compared with the heavy artillery barrages of the last war. Our troops cheerfully endured these barrages, often losing more than 50% casualties, yet they were well able to repel the Infantry assault which followed them.

2. **Our troops giving up positions because of Heavy Mortar Fire.**

The same remarks apply as above. The German Mortar Bomb makes a much louder bang but inflicts much less injury than our own. It bursts on contact and only a direct hit can have a chance of causing injury to men who are dug in below ground level, or who are protected by slight folds in the ground or by walls. A direct hit is most unlikely.

3. **Our troops retiring because of enemy infiltration round flanks.**

The Germans use their tommy guns and light automatics very boldly. Working round to a flank these guns open fire—even firing into the air if no target can be engaged. This gives our troops the feeling that they are surrounded by superior forces—that they must get up and get back to keep contact with the rear.

BATTLE DRILL is the best answer to these forms of PSYCHOLOGICAL TERROR WARFARE. If we can get the discipline of the parade ground on to the battlefield, better still, if we can accustom the troops by realistic exercises—use of live ammunition, noise, etc.—to carrying out movement on the battlefield without being distracted by noise, blood and death and mutilation—we shall soon be able to ignore these German methods.

The following **STANDING ORDERS FOR BATTLE DISCIPLINE** are suggested. They must be learned and thoroughly understood by all ranks **ON TRAINING**.

STANDING ORDERS FOR BATTLE DISCIPLINE.

(A) **WHEN NOT IN CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY AND NOT ON THE MOVE ENSURE THAT:—**

1. Your secs take best available cover. Sec. Comdrs. keep their men **close by and take charge**.

2. Men of sec. do not move without orders from their commander.

3. As soon as debris has subsided. Sec. Commander reports to Pl. Comdr. with unwounded men and receives orders.

4. All action taken after bombs have exploded will be done **calmly and methodically**.

5. Any wild shouting and running about will be immediately stopped.

(B) **WHEN ON THE MOVE AND NOT IN CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY.**

1. Whether in M.T. or marching do not stop unless enemy bombs are causing casualties or unless you are the target of a direct attack by dive-bombers.

2. As soon as bombs cease to explode in your close vicinity, Sec. Comdrs. report casualties, if any.

3. Wounded will be parked on the side of the road with ONE unwounded man in charge.

4. Re-embus or continue marching without delay.

5. Sec. Comdrs. keep control of shell shock or hysteria cases temporarily and will maintain strict march discipline.

II. **IN CASE OF SHELL FIRE AND MORTAR FIRE.**

(A) **IF HOLDING POSTS IN ACTION AGAINST ENEMY.**

1. No post will be abandoned because of heavy shell or mortar fire.

2. If necessary, **thin out towards the enemy**, by putting some men in adjacent shell holes, etc., **DO NOT RETIRE.**

3. Dig out men partially buried by displaced earth.

4. Sec. Commanders keep close control.

REMEMBER THAT FOR REASONS OF SAFETY THE ENEMY MUST BE AT LEAST 150 to 200 YARDS BEHIND HIS OWN MORTAR BOMBS. YOU MUST BOB UP QUICKLY AND KILL HIM AS SOON AS FIRE CEASES.

(B) **IF MOVING ON FOOT IN THE FORWARD AREA.**

1. Pay no attention to shells bursting 200 yards or more away.

2. Continue marching. Allow no dispersal; maintain march discipline.

3. If shells very close or causing casualties Sec. Comdr. orders men to lie flat in a close group.

4. **No dispersal within the Sec. will be allowed.**

5. As soon as shells have burst and salvo is complete, Sec. Comdr. orders "Get up" and reforms as quickly as possible.

6. Casualties will be dealt with as for bombing.

(C) **WHEN COUNTER-ATTACKING.**

No notice of shell fire will be taken.

III. **IN CASE OF ENEMY INFILTRATION TO YOUR FLANKS OR REAR.**

1. Expect this—it is quite normal in mobile warfare where there is no front, no rear and no flanks.

2. Combat it **OFFENSIVELY**, send out your MOBILE FIRE UNIT to mop up any such enemy patrols.

3. **DON'T RETREAT**—you have been organized to fight on where you are with full supplies of all you need. You need not worry about being cut off.

IT IS THE ENEMY WHO WILL BE CUT OFF IF YOU STAND YOUR GROUND AND HIT BACK.

HOW TO TEACH BATTLE DISCIPLINE.

1. Squad does 5 minutes intensive arms drill. Any mistake, however slight, is pounced on.

2. Squad do 10 minutes infiltration drill (see before).

3. Instructor points out to the men that they enjoyed the drill, that they got a "team thrill" out of it; that they got that feeling because no one was half-hearted or slack and because there was instant obedience and discipline on the part of all.

4. Demonstration squad give the following demonstration :—

Corporal X has been given his sec. and has been told :—

"Give them 10 minutes battle discipline."

(i) He takes them to the middle of a field and shouts :—

"You're under fire."

Some men dart for an isolated bush, some run about, others get slowly down to the ground.

Corporal X gives "as you were"—and repeats it until every man throws himself flat instantly and crawls quickly forward.

(ii) Corporal X shouts "Line that bank."

Some men run, others walk. Three bunch together behind prominent isolated cover, one exposes his head over the top of the cover.

Corporal X gives "as you were" until perfection is reached.

(iii) Corporal X shouts "Cross this stream."

Section dither on the bank looking for easy crossing places. They then cross in Indian File.

Corporal X again gives "as you were."

(iv) Corporal X gives "Cross that hedge."

Section all bunch into an easy gap and queue up.

Corporal X gives "as you were" until every man can take the hedge rapidly on his own.

And so on, each lesson being an example of what troops will be required to do in battle.

5. **Final Phase.** Each sec. leader takes his own section on a similar "Battle Discipline" period. These periods should be very frequent. They will practice the sec. leader in command of the section in the field, and the men in speed and discipline; both will learn practical fieldcraft in an interesting way.

These periods are very strenuous if rightly handled, and they can be used as toughening exercises.

One of the reasons why battle discipline is bad at present is not the will to disobey on the part of the man but his inexperience in vigorous fieldcraft.

6. **Post-final phase.** Pte. Smith is charged with Conduct to the Prejudice of good order, *i.e.*, endangering the lives of his comrades by exposing himself needlessly on a skyline and is punished severely.

DEFENCE.

There is no subject so superficially simple and no subject in which muddled thinking can produce such disastrous results on the ground as this.

The difficulties occur because although at first glance, defence appears to be one subject with one set of rules, there are in reality 5 different types of defensive systems, and the trouble is that whilst the rules for these types have many points in common, there are a number of quite important differences which are not apparent at first sight.

It has been the practice not to teach the principles of defence below Platoon Commanders, partly because it is difficult to make the subject interesting, and partly because it was thought unnecessary that the private soldier should burden his mind with these problems.

It is hoped that in the following drills it can be shown that it is possible to make the study of defence an amusing

and interesting team game and to prove that all these systems will break down unless the **private soldier** understands quite clearly what is expected of him on each occasion.

Overriding Principle.

This applies to ALL forms of Defence.

Defence is OFFENSIVE.

Never be passive sitting behind a river line or a wire barrier digging posts or preparing camouflage and leaving the enemy to organize his offensive unmolested.

This is the fatal mistake we have made again and again. If you sit in a post and permit enemy troops to infiltrate through gaps unmolested, the end will quickly come.

Each force, however small—even the platoon—must organize within itself a small mobile force—capable of going out, harassing the enemy and darting back when recalled by signal—A FIRE UNIT.

The fire unit will be organized as soon as the defensive position is occupied, it will reconnoitre routes out and prepare the outlying positions if this is necessary.

The defensive post itself will be regarded as a BASE out of which the FIRE UNIT will make sorties.

The Russians have used this policy with great effect even sending fire units across mile wide rivers, such as the Dneiper, to ward off possible enemy counter-attacks.

The five different systems are as follows:—

No. 1.—ISOLATED DEFENCE.

Defence of a V.P. or a Nodal point, or any form of Isolated Locality. Usually based on holding a key town or a key village or a key across roads or holding a power stn or an aerodrome.

The basic principle behind it is always the denying to the enemy the USE OF THE MEANS of RAPID COMMUNICATION—denying him the roads, railways, aerodromes or good air-landing facilities. The defence of the Downs is a good example of a not very obvious form of this type, one likely to be confused with No. 2 below.

The test to apply in order to ascertain whether the system belongs to No. 1 or No. 2 is simply "**AM I ISOLATED ?**"

This system will often occur in static warfare, *e.g.*, the defence of Britain—but it is just as likely to crop up in the midst of mobile warfare when least expected. The primary

principle overriding all others in this system is not the infliction of casualties on the enemy but the DEFENCE of the actual key point sought to be defended ITSELF.

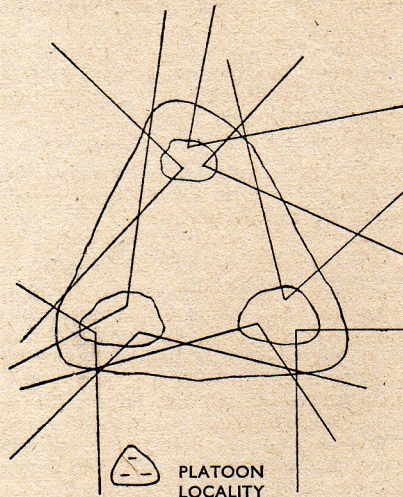
No. 2.—MUTUAL DEFENCE.

This will usually occur in mobile warfare and in one or the other of the following situations :—

(a) **Army attacking**—momentum spent—cannot push on further without re-organizing for fresh advance, or

(b) **Army retreating**—must hold up enemy thrusts and slow up his advance.

In both cases the commander decides to throw out at once a zone or screen of **MUTUALLY SUPPORTING** defended localities to protect his army by putting down all round it a belt of organized crossfire.



WITHIN A COMPANY ANTI-TANK LOCALITY.

The principles governing this system are :—

(a) **Mutual support.** The Platoon localities must be kept compact and close together because the key to the whole system is that the infilade fire of one Platoon locality **MUST** protect the next one within the Coy. anti-tank locality.

There is thus at once a fundamental difference between No. 1 and No. 2 system. The primary object now is no longer the protection of the immediate area in which the post itself is situated, but the protection of the posts on its flanks and the neutralization of all ground in front of them. The protection of the Platoon itself becomes the **primary** responsibility of others—the Platoons on its flanks.

(b) The lowest form of life capable of any all round protection is the **PLATOON**. Localities will now usually be company localities at least—compact “islands of resistance” into which the enemy cannot possibly infiltrate. These islands of resistance will be solidly organized even if gaps have to be left between the localities themselves.

(c) **Depth.** You must get as many localities, one behind the other as you can, to guard against enemy penetration. If this is done slight penetration need not cause undue alarm. The system is like a cushion—it can stand a punch without breaking up.

No. 3.—Defence of a River Line, Estuary, or a Canal Line of a Coast Line or the Line of an Artificial Obstacle to Communications.

The circumstances in which this system is created will be precisely similar to those giving rise to No. 2 system.

In this instance, however, the **HIGHER FORMATION COMMANDER** (e.g., Div Comd or possibly the Brig.) finds in front of him a river or obstacle much the same as in system No. 2. The Higher formation commander here decides that the obstacle in front of him is so good in **ITSELF** that it is **WORTH DEFENDING AS AN OBSTACLE IN ITSELF**. In other words, he decides that instead of relying on an obstacle of **BULLETS** supported by **DEPTH**, he will rely upon an obstacle of **WATER** supported by **BULLETS**, even if depth has to be sacrificed.

In view of the confusion in many minds on this old question, “When do I and when don’t I, sit on the river line?” it is worth while to turn aside for a moment to consider the Higher Formation Commander’s problems in this instance.

His first leaning will be towards the orthodox system No. 2—Defence in depth by mutually supporting defended

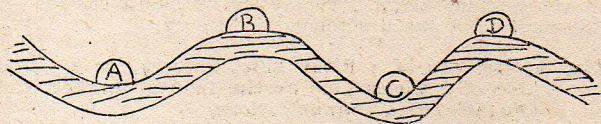
localities. To get this he will require a great deal of TIME. Coy. tank-proof localities cannot be improvised. The Higher Commander may well therefore order his covering troops to hang on to some natural new line obstacle for as long as possible whilst his prepared defences are being organized.

In order to establish System No. 3 the following principles must be adhered to:—

(a) Every inch of the water must be covered by fire. It is obvious that an obstacle which is not covered by fire is not in war an obstacle at all.

(b) Keep a mobile reserve to make sure that if fire superiority over the obstacle is ever lost it can be very quickly re-established. Always keep your **front line** intact, because that is the whole foundation of your system and you cannot stand any penetration at all.

The effects of these principles upon the layout of the defence can be best shown diagrammatically:—



In order to cover all the water in the river shown in diagram posts will be needed at "A," "B," "C," and "D." These posts are **thrust** upon the commander as soon as he decides to adopt No. 3 and to defend the river line. As a result:—

(a) He loses a good deal of depth—the more linear the defence becomes, obviously the more depth is lost.

(b) Fields of fire on the river bank will be much shorter and poorer and are much more likely to be masked by obstacles.

(c) Mutual support of every locality may not always be possible.

(d) The posts will be very easy to spot and very difficult to dig or camouflage. They will probably suffer severely from enemy artillery, or dive bombers.

To summarize.—The defensive layout in hasty defence becomes a slave to the indentations and vagaries of the waterline; all other considerations, however important, are subordinated to this.

Any commander will therefore think very carefully before he adopts System No. 3 in preference to System No. 2, and he will probably only do so if:—

(a) The troops under his command are so thin on the ground that he is compelled to adopt a linear defensive system anyway. In this case he may as well take advantage of the river for what it is worth,—**OR**

(b) If the troops under his command are so numerous that he can have the best of both worlds—such depth that in reality system 3 is backed up by system 2 in rear—two layers, one behind the other on both sides of the river—**OR**

(c) If the obstacle is so wide and straight (*e.g.*, a good canal) or so broad (*e.g.*, the Dnieper or the English Channel) that the advantages of hitting the enemy whilst he is incommoded on the water, out-weigh the many inherent disadvantages above enumerated.

All these considerations will be weighed by the higher formation commander at the time his appreciation is made, and he will **elect** which of the two systems is the more desirable in the circumstances. He will issue orders accordingly either:—

"The Division will hold the line of the river X."

(Or alternatively)

"The Division will organize a system of localities in depth based on the river X."

It will be the task of junior commanders to carry these orders into effect, **realizing clearly all that is implied**, and with no confusion in their minds between the one system and the other. It will be fatal if they go to work with preconceived ideas, influenced largely by the problems of their own little sector, and muddle the necessities and obligations of the one system with those of the other.

N.B.—Very few rivers in England are good enough to merit consideration.

No. 4.—LINEAR DEFENCE PROPER.

This is the system of continuous trenches and wire belts—each separated by a narrow NO MAN'S LAND and backed up by masses of static artillery—the system thrown up in the last war.

This system has been killed in this war by:—

(a) The power of paratroops and airborne troops who

simply jump right over it and create havoc in the very soft undefended areas behind, and in the supply lines.

(b) The armoured divs, which soon bore a tiny hole in it and then pour through, fan out, and do likewise.

(c) The speed and fire power of modern infantry—enabling it to infiltrate through such systems.

This system only occurs in this war in local theatres of war. Its development is largely a technical matter going far beyond the scope of the Platoon, and it is not therefore dealt with further in this book.

No. 5.—GUERRILLA DEFENCE.

When in England we think of guerrillas, our mind usually conjures up a couple of ragged peasants armed with knives and sticks, hiding in a ditch.

But the Russians have shown us quite recently that such a conception is as much an anachronism as many of our other thoughts about this war.

Instead of leaving their Home Guard behind in pathetic little trenches to bear the full brunt of the panzer divs, unaided, they have organized a second line of defence for the Home Guard to retire to as soon as the odds become too heavy.

Well in advance, skillful hideouts are dug in nearby forests, so well camouflaged that weeks of searching would probably not reveal them. These are stocked with plentiful supplies of food, water and ammunition.

By day, the guerrillas hide in their dug-outs. At night they come out well armed and equipped and play havoc with the enemy communications, transport and his sleep.

The enemy has so far found no answer to this menace. As a result, every Russian Home Guard is worth his weight in gold.

Would it not pay our own Guard to take a leaf out of this Russian book?

DRILLS FOR ISOLATED DEFENCE (Def. System No. 1).

Principles.

1. The defence of the site itself comes first. That is THE task. Don't be led astray by ANY other circumstances.

2. All round vision before Action Stations.
All round ring of fire after Action Stations.

3. Road communications are vital to a modern offensive, and these must be denied to the enemy. Therefore BLOCK ALL ROADS in the area and cover the blocks with fire.

4. The distance between section posts will be largely influenced by the size of the site to be protected. Subject to this all posts must be as compact and close together as possible so that infiltration between them is barred.

DRILLS.

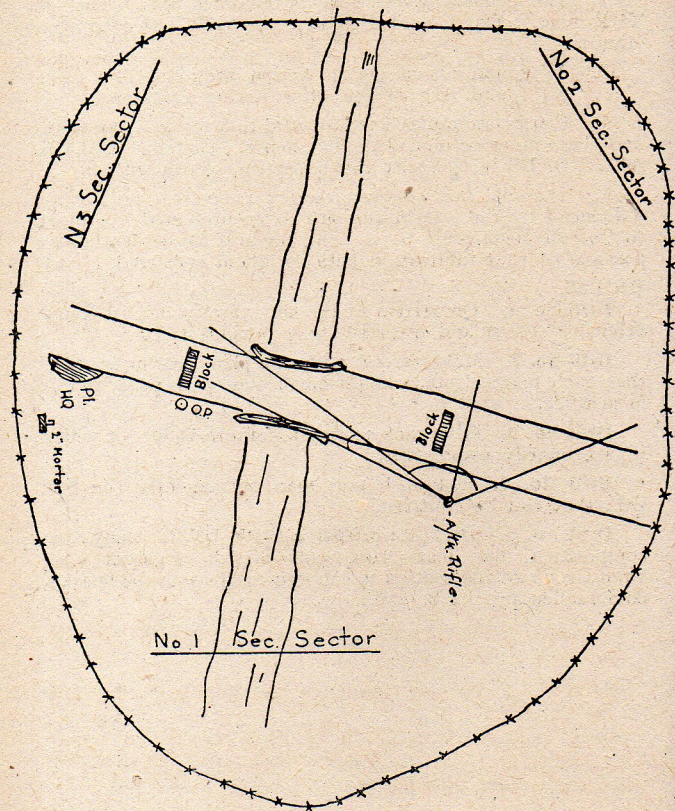
Drill No. 1. On arrival at the site, thrown out all round **defensive screen** and establish best possible O.P.

Drill No. 2. Make careful **recce and plan**, bearing in mind that each post selected should cover the other posts if this is possible.

Drill No. 3. Give each section a definite **sector** for which it is primarily responsible.

Drill No. 4. Establish and man permanently the **best O.P.** that can be contrived.

Drill No. 5. Organize offensive **FIRE UNIT**. Suggested composition, one man from each section together with Bren Group of the section which can most easily be spared, commanded by the 2 i/c Pl.



The FIRE UNIT Must:—

(a) Reconnoitre and prepare definite fire positions —2 or 3—to cover likely enemy forming up places or covered approaches.

(b) Never go more than 1,000 yds from the base, even in the most open country and should never go 1 yd. further than it has to do, to do its job, 50 yds. is the ideal.

(c) Be prepared to accept up to 50% casualties before returning to the Base.

(d) Lay on and rehearse a foolproof signal or system for recall.

(e) Rehearse its role frequently with a tame enemy if good results are to be achieved.

(f) Organize at least one duplicate Fire Unit to practice its role. It would be better still if every man on the site could understand and practise this role in order to keep up the offensive spirit.

Drill No. 6. Priority of Tasks.

(a) Clearance of fields of fire comes first.

FIRE is more important than protection.

(b) The best protection is SLIT TRENCHES. The old Firebays are too bulky and obvious, and too obvious and too easy to spot from the air.

(c) Firebays are worth digging as dummies all the same. They are the best form of camouflage if 150 yds. away from the real posts.

(d) Wire in all sectors, siting the wire so that it can all be covered by fire. Wire which cannot be covered by fire is useless.

Drill No. 7. Definite Tasks for the 2-inch Mortar and A. Tk. Rifle.

These must NOT be left in Pl. H.Q. waiting for something to turn up. They must have definite positions allocated range cards, range marks, etc.

DRILLS FOR MUTUAL DEFENCE (Def. System No. 2).

These are the MOST IMPORTANT of the Defence drills.

For the reasons set out below, it is necessary that every private soldier should understand them thoroughly. They have, therefore, been reduced to a simple mnemonic system of pictures which is quite easy to learn and which once learnt is never forgotten.

Students get rather confused amongst these pictures in the first instance, but once they have completed an exercise on the ground following the drills **rigidly** item by item, they will find themselves able to locate the best defensive position methodically, rapidly, and with great confidence.

Object. To get a zone of **mutually supporting** defended localities within the area of the Company anti-tank locality, each helping the other with enfilade cross fire. There are **11 drills for Mutual Defence (A cricket team)**.

DRILL No. 1.



"A screen with a soldier's head sticking out over the top."

Pl. Commander on reaching approximate area allotted to him must throw out a **SCREEN** of rapidly organized defensive section posts to protect the area during the recce. He must also find and **man an O.P.** (a tree or the top of a house).

DRILL No. 2.

? ? ?

"The Three Question Marks."

Pl. Comd. now goes to the Coy. Commander's O. Gp for orders. There are **three questions** he must ask if they have not been answered by the orders he has already received.

(i) **WHERE IS THE COMPANY KILLING GROUND?**—i.e., the zone in front of the Company locality in which the bullets are intended to fall and where the enemy is to be definitely stopped and killed (e.g., the low ground you see this side of that stream).

(ii) **WHERE IS THE AREA IN WHICH I MAY SITE MY PL. LOCALITY?** (e.g., that high ground which you see over there).

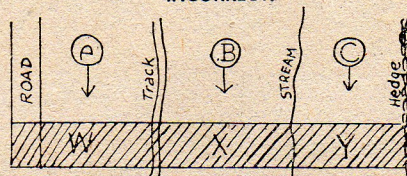
(iii) **WHERE ARE THE SIMILAR AREAS TO BE OCCUPIED BY THE PLATOONS ON MY FLANKS?** (e.g., near that farm you see there).

Quite often the orders received will contain a lot about "inter-platoon boundaries" or the phrase may be used—"8 Pl.—YOU WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR the area between that road and this hedge." All this is most confusing since it gives to the Pl. Comdr. a completely false picture of what his primary task is.

Indeed these words are responsible for many major defensive faults.

This can best be illustrated diagrammatically:—

INCORRECT.



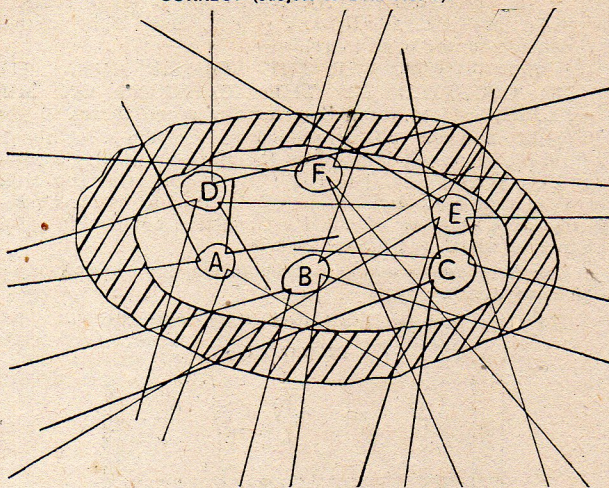
(A), (B) and (C) represent sites for platoon localities and the shaded area W, X, Y is indicated as the Company Killing ground.

If the commanders of (A), (B) and (C) are simply given inter-platoon boundaries (as shown) and told for example:—"you will be responsible for the area between the Road incl. and that track inclusive," they will get a completely false impression of their responsibilities.

They will probably go straight to the centre of their area, face front, glue their eyes on their front and plan their positions paying primary regard to their front (A), will consider area W—(B) will consider area X—(C) will consider area Y. They may not even bother to look outside what they regard as THEIR BOUNDARIES. They will thus evolve between them a system in which each platoon's principle field of fire is facing front—parallel with that of the platoons on the right and left—just the system which must be avoided at all costs.

In fact the system needed is shown in the following diagram :—

CORRECT (Subject to Drill No. 3).



III—KILLING GROUND.

System of Cross Fire by Platoons within a 2 Company Anti-Tank Locality.

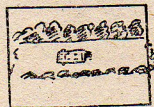
Note that the **Company** killing ground in the correct diagram is now greater than the company front—it must extend for the length of one platoon locality on either side of the front (areas V and Z on the above diagram).

The one area for which each platoon locality is NOT PRIMARILY responsible is the area directly to its front. That area is the responsibility of the localities on its left and right.

THIS FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE MUST BE THOROUGHLY UNDERSTOOD.

DRILL No. 3.—The key to modern defence, is to **HOLD ALL ROADS.**

“A ROAD”



A modern attack cannot develop at speed unless the roads can be captured so that wheeled vehicles, *e.g.*, the platoon truck, can get up with supplies.

Even if the enemy infiltrates or deploys across country, leaving the roads, he will ultimately be forced to attack and to try to capture the roads in order to get his transport up and through. **The drill therefore, is :—**

If a road runs through my area, I must make its defence my primary task, **however adversely my cross fire support for other platoons may be affected.**

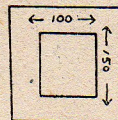
Very often (particularly in England), roads are masked by high hedges and banks, or they are screened by trees, buildings and walls. The adequate defence of a road may well be a complete task in itself, leaving no surplus of fire power available for cross support of adjacent localities.

The road must be regarded as a V.P.—an isolated task—even though it is right in the centre of a defence system.

The wise commander will realise this and will detail platoons or companies for this special task. **HE WILL NEVER USE A ROAD AS A CONVENIENT BOUNDARY** to mark the dividing line between two formations. Drill No. 3, therefore, is :—

If a road runs through my area, the defence of it automatically becomes my primary task. I must site my locality astride the road, and I can only give supporting cross-fire to adjacent platoons if I can spare it.

DRILL No. 4.



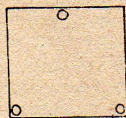
“A Tablecloth 100 yards square which is too small for the table it is to cover : a soldier lying down beside it.”

There is no road in my area—therefore I am free to site my platoon post where I please within the locality allotted to me.

The area allotted to me (nearly always) is so big that in trying to find the portion I can really cover, I feel I am looking for a needle in a haystack. If I am not methodical and systematic, I shall wander aimlessly all over the area looking now at nasty covered approaches, now at beautiful fields of fire. I shall want to deal with both and shall soon be torn asunder by a mixture of conflicting emotions.

A powerful centrifugal force will drag me outwards, ever outwards, in a hopeless effort to cover everything in

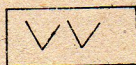
this area. I shall soon have sited the section posts like this :—



leaving them wide open for enemy infiltration.

I must know what I am looking for and I must look for it systematically.

DRILL No. 5.



"Two Victory V's."

I must learn to look **outside** the boundaries of my own area. Whatever the orders have stressed as soon as I see I have no road to defend I must say—Victory V—Victory V—I must get my shots in the V pattern—enfilade cross fire **outside** my own area and in front of the areas on my flanks.

You are looking for a small compact area of ground, giving you the best possible V fields of fire from its corners across your neighbour's fronts. The size of the area is 100 yards square—that is the size of the imaginary tablecloth (Drill No. 4), rolled up in your pocket. You cannot stretch that tablecloth one yard because it isn't made of elastic and it won't stretch.

Method.

As a drill, I must select a good line across my area at right angles to the enemy axis of advance. I must then go to the extreme right of the area—face front, then right incline—**LIE DOWN**—observe the area immediately in front of the platoon locality to my right, which it is my duty to support with cross fire. Memorise the field of fire.

Next, I face front and left incline—**LIE DOWN**—memorise the field of fire again.

I now have a single V in my mind. I must memorise it.

I may now have a maximum distance of 100 yards inwards towards the centre of my area.

Again I lie down, repeating the process, but this time doing the left incline first before I do the right incline.

Again I memorise the fields of fire and now I have a pair of V's in my mind.

Now (as a drill) I go over to the extreme left edge of my area. I repeat the drills considering the left incline gives me a view over the next sector on my left, which is again my main responsibility.

Again I have in mind another pair of Vs.

If the area allotted to me is large, I may find it necessary to repeat the drill in the centre of my area.

If the general line across my area originally (selected for my original recce) is not the best one, I may have to repeat the whole drill on another cross line. This will not happen with a little practice.

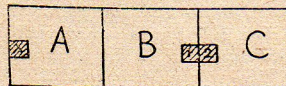
I now have in mind two or three of these double Vs'. I must arrange them in my mind in order of preference—1, 2, 3.

DRILL No. 6.

oooo "A CHAIN."

With the order of preference in mind, visit the platoon commanders on my flanks. They will have by now reached a similar stage in their own drills.

The essence of the system I am building up, is mutual co-operation, and I shall fail if I don't get this at an early stage. This sort of failure can best be shown in the following diagram :—



If (A), (B) and (C) are three areas allotted to three different platoon commanders, and X, Y, Z represents their first preferences, it will be necessary for each to adjust the position of his first preference or to give it up altogether in order to fit it to the common pattern.

No difficulty is likely to occur in securing adjustments since each position was in the first place based on mutual support.

Drill.—I adjust my choice to meet the requirements of my neighbours and make my final selection. I go back to my own area.

DRILL No. 7.



"A BATTLESHIP."

Drill.—Mental picture on the way back to my chosen area—my platoon is a Battleship—one indivisible whole. Each fire turret (section) is linked with the others by walls of **fire**—which are going to be just as solid and continuous as the steel walls of the real ship.

If I were to disperse my sections to defend the area, leaving large gaps between them, it would be just as absurd as if the Admiralty tried to defend the Atlantic Ocean by cutting up all its ships and dotting their gun turrets about on their own.

DRILL No. 8.



"A TRIANGLE."

Drill.—The Battleship is triangular in shape with the turrets fixed on the corners.

The triangle (it can be any sort of triangle), offers the best mutual support between section posts.

These section posts must not be nearer together than 30 yards (60 yards is ideal) and the whole triangle must be fitted by me into the 100 yards square tablecloth which I have already pinned down on to the ground.

DRILL No. 9.



"THE KNIFE OVER TWO SPADES."

Drill.—Priority of tasks.

1. **THE KNIFE.**—Clearance of field of fire comes **FIRST**. **FIRE** is the first consideration in all forms of infantry fighting.

2. **THE SPADE.**—Dig **SLIT TRENCHES ONLY.**—The old fire bay of the last war is a waste of time in mobile warfare. Worse, it is a positive danger—impossible to camouflage overhead, an easy target for dive-bomber and machine gunner (see lessons of Crete).

Slit trenches sited under a hedge or trees (not isolated, of course) are practically invisible.

3. **THE SPADE again.**—Dig the fire bays just the same, the Germans know we love them and the best protection or camouflage is a dummy position about 150 yards away from my section post. The enemy will probably plaster it with accurate fire, as he will think that my return fire is coming from there.

4. **WIRE.**—I shall not have much of this in mobile warfare. Don't use it to make a bull's-eye of the post. Use it to block access to likely covered approaches at a point where they can be covered by fire.

DRILL No. 10.



"A CIRCLE WITHIN A CIRCLE"
(OR DARTBOARD)

if you can remember that more easily.

Drill.—Having left the platoon to get on with tasks, I must go out **immediately** to consider the **OUTER CIRCLE** of my defence—the previously prepared and selected positions **OUTSIDE** the platoon locality to which the **MOBILE FIRE UNIT** will be sent to deal with likely enemy forming-up places and covered approaches. (See previous notes).

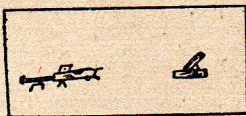
Remember—Prepare positions carefully and name them.

—Practice the fire unit and a duplicate fire unit in every task.

—Arrange recall signals.

—Inform your neighbours.

DRILL No. 11.



"AN ANTI-TANK RIFLE AND 2-INCH MORTAR."

Drill.—These two neglected weapons play an important role in the fire symphony. They must not be dumped in platoon H.Q. for use at casual opportunity targets.

Work out for them their best use, prepare positions, if necessary, prepare range cards, give them definite tasks. Don't forget that the A/Tk. rifle is very useful against enemy in slight cover or in buildings.

DRILLS FOR HASTY DEFENCE OF A RIVER LINE, ESTUARY, COAST LINE OR ARTIFICIAL LINEAR OBSTACLE.

(Defence System No. 3).

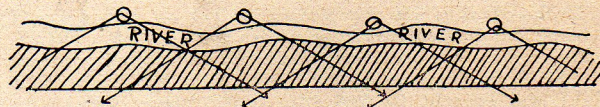
As we have seen :—

1. Every inch of the obstacle must be covered by fire.
2. A mobile reserve must be kept to regain fire superiority over the obstacle instantly, should it ever be lost.

All other considerations, even including depth, may have to be sacrificed to achieve these necessities.

DRILLS.

1. Put out protective screen and O.P. as before.
2. Select DAY positions. Every inch of the water and as large an area of killing ground on the FAR side of the water as you can.



"TYPICAL KILLING GROUND"
(Shaded).

In selecting the killing ground it is better to keep the enemy at long range away from the river bank than to rely on surprise and then on killing him at short range.

DRILL No. 3.—The V pattern—enfilade cross fire is the only way to cover bends on the obstacle and to give some

degree of mutual support. 100 per cent mutual support may not always be possible, but it should be attempted.

DRILL No. 4.—Mobile reserve for immediate counter-attacks. This may be as small as the reserve section in this form of defence held for counter-attack in every platoon area.

A mobile reserve platoon supporting each two forward platoons is a better lay-out—if thick on the ground you may be able to afford both.

DRILL No. 5.—Mobile Fire Unit.—In this case it should go ACROSS the obstacle. (Route for withdrawal and destruction of the crossing must be laid on). HARASS THE ENEMY—DON'T JUST SIT TIGHT. (The mobile fire unit, can, after withdrawal, conveniently be used as the mobile reserve).

DRILL No. 6.—Definite tasks for the A/Tk. rifle and the 2-inch mortar.

DRILL No. 7.—Make special NIGHT dispositions, remembering that the use of smoke by the enemy may quite easily reproduce night conditions in day time.

At night visibility decreases and the killing ground decreases correspondingly. It may become by night only the actual area of the obstacle itself, or even less than this.

In these conditions :—

- (1). Posts right on the water's edge will be essential.
- (2). Patrolling between posts will be necessary if the posts are even slightly dispersed.
- (3). Fixed lines for the Brens.
- (4). Definite S.O.S. task for the 2-inch mortar.

DRILL No. 8.—Alternative positions are essential and take a very high priority.

In this form of defence, posts are very easy to spot. Digging beside a waterlogged river bank may be impossible, and the obstacle itself is always an excellent ranging mark. The defenders must expect heavy and accurate enemy mortar and artillery fire, and they must be prepared to make frequent lateral moves if casualties are to be avoided.

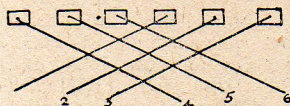
PRACTICE.

The theory of enfilade cross fire plays a vital part in nearly all defensive positions. No matter how carefully

the commander may plan, his efforts will be brought to nothing if the private soldier—No. 1 or No. 2 on the Bren gun cannot get rid of their "face your front" complex. They will ignore his dispositions and only shoot at an enemy who is in front of them.

This complex can be overcome:—

(a) By firing the Bren gun on range practices not directly to the front, but across each other. Thus:—



(b) When the post siting is over, making out special L.M.G. range cards and range marks so that they focus attention primarily on the principle arcs of fire.—Cross arcs.

THE TACTICAL PICTURE ON WHICH BATTLE DRILL IS BASED.

Through out every Battle Drill course many students—particularly the keener ones—will say—

"This drill is all very well. But how does the business of flanking movements, attempted encirclement, speed and mobile defence fit into the larger picture of this War? Is it really how we shall fight? Is it based on real fighting as it has been, is, and will be in this war?"

It is the purpose of these notes to show that the idea of Battle Drill not only does fit right into the picture, but that a far wider application of its principles to much higher formations is an urgent practical necessity.

1. **The Attack.**—Throw your mind back to any T.E.W.T. scheme or exercise carried out either before this war or during it. Take any Attack scheme.

Line 1, para. 1, page 1, will always read—"The enemy are holding a line from Windmill Hill to Castle Hill."

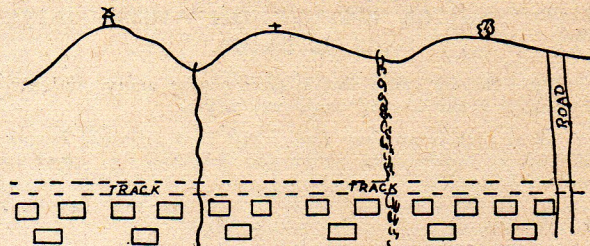
Diagram No. 1—IMAGINARY PANORAMA.



Let us suppose that this is a Brigade scheme. The Commander now views the range of hills before him through his glasses at a distance of, say, 1500 yards. He and many officers around him have in mind that enemy **line**. A line is something in many people's minds which is equally thick throughout its length. Many of the officers present had much experience in the war of 1914—1918 and they especially will tend to look at the enemy defensive system in the light of their own experience—as a line of trenches, fire bays, parapets, communications and continuous wire.

With this idea, perhaps only subconsciously, in mind, but yet exerting an immense influence, orders are now given out:—

Diagram No. 2—"TYPICAL BRIGADE ATTACK."



PLATOON IN POSITION TO COMMENCE ATTACK.
(LEADING COMPANIES ONLY SHOWN).

ORDERS.

Information.—The enemy are holding line of hills you see before you (P.129).

Intention.—To capture the three hills—Windmill Hill—Telegraph Hill—Big Tree Hill.

(Note particularly—the **intention** is the CAPTURE THE GROUND one sees in front. Everyone thinks at once of a **FRONTAL** Attack with the one object of gaining about 1500 yards of ground—exactly as one used to do on all real attacks in the last war).

Method.—Brigade will attack on a three battalion front. No. 1 bn. left. No. 2 bn. centre. And No. 3 bn. right. Bn. objective respectively—Windmill Hill, Telegraph Hill, Big Tree Hill.

(NOTE.)

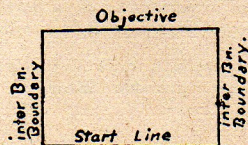
INTER BATTALION DIVIDING LINES.—Line of the stream—line of the hedge—line of the road.

START LINE.—Line of the track.

Zero hour.—1½ hours' time. (NOTE.)

Artillery Barrage.—Lifting, etc., and the usual trimmings.

What is the result of all these orders? Each bn. has now been enclosed in a rigid rectangular box as below:—



out of which it has no authority to manoeuvre.

The **START LINE** must be parallel to the **OBJECTIVE**, the **INTER-BATTALION DIVIDING LINES** must be parallel with each other.

This craze for parallelism is enforcedly passed right down through the battalion to the company, through the company to the platoon. Each in turn neatly sub-divides the frontage allotted to it and parcels it out amongst its own sub-units. Some company commanders **never** do anything else but this.

So one gets down on the ground to what may be called the "Egg Box" system. (See diagram).

Start	Line
o	o
o	o
o	o
o	o

o = Platoon in position to commence attack.

Each platoon is encased by its orders in a rigid box about 150 yards square. Woe betide the unfortunate platoon commander who does not start square to his objective, or who dares to wander outside the area allotted to him into the area of a neighbour. He will only get full marks if he goes straight on all the time.

Is it any wonder that platoon commanders get a fixation on this matter, and are seen on every possible occasion practising frontal attacks on their own, with sections about 100 yards apart—the Bren guns being carted forward with the rest of the section in pathetic frontal short rushes of a 100 yards (UP! DOWN! UP! DOWN!)? And **this**, he thinks, is "fire and movement!" He doesn't know any better. It is not his fault. Anyone in his place would think and do the same.

Now does this picture—the egg-box frontal attack bear any relation whatever to actual fighting as we shall experience it in this war? Is it a true picture?

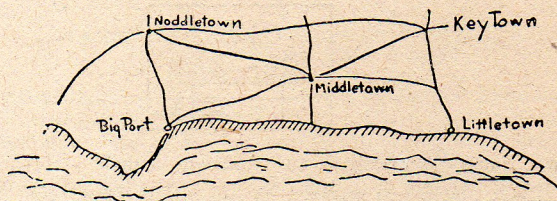
It is not a true picture and it bears little relation to fighting in this war.

2. **The Defence.**—In order to examine the true picture we must for a moment turn right away from the study of attack and consider the defence.

What are the defensive systems we are likely to encounter in this war? If we know these we can soon see whether our training for attack is based on correct or incorrect hypotheses.

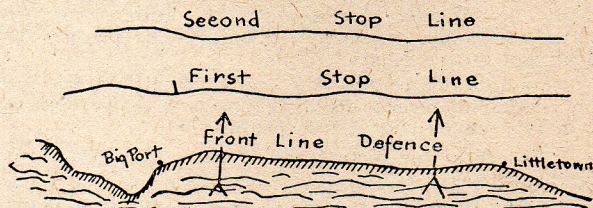
Let us first examine our own defensive doctrine and its evolution during these last months since the collapse of France. We have all had a lot of practice in defence during this time in our own country, and we ought to know all there is to know about it.

Take first the coastline of any part of England about 4 to 12 weeks after the collapse of France.



The only defensive system that you would have found would have been a long thin continuous line of trenches and posts stretching right along the coast. This line would be of varying thickness according to the supposed degree of vulnerability of the coast, but it would nowhere be more than 3—4 hundred yards deep.

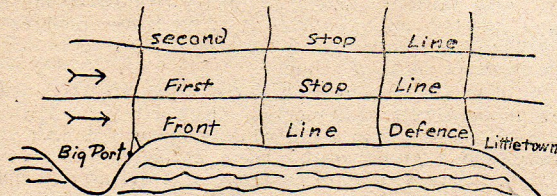
Of course it was not long before a questioning voice explained how unsatisfactory this system might prove to be. If you get enemy penetration there was no depth to withstand it. So this matter was dealt with.



So called "stop lines"—anti-tank ditches, concrete pill-boxes and the like were constructed at varying distances

back from the coastal front line on which our army could in theory rally, or where reserves could assemble if there was any enemy penetration from the sea.

But once again came the questioning voice. Suppose the enemy landed—captured BIG PORT and disobligingly moved not inland away from the sea, but laterally parallel to the coast?



The linear obsessed gentlemen were still equal to the occasion. Running down into the sea were a number of small rivers, or rather rivulets. These could be deepened and revetted (although they were very winding and dotted with covered approaches) and made into lateral lines upon which defences ultimately be based.

The whole system when complete was given the appropriate name of—"The Grid System."

But **still** the questioning voice remained dissatisfied. What about enemy paratroops and airborne troops? Won't they just leap-frog the whole grid system and attack it from the inside? Won't panzer divisions if landed by sea, **still** be able to carry out their well known "Break-through, followed by a fanning out tactic?" And won't either or both of these forms of offensive play havoc with our supply echelons—command, division, brigade, battalions—each very vulnerable and almost unprotected—each holding supplies of food and ammunition for a few hours only.

Shall we be able to fight on, if this system is punctured?

Finally came the man who simply said:—"In all previous wars we have had to observe the principle of economy of force, never more so than in the last war. In that war we discovered that a division can only hold a frontage of about five miles. I have examined your grid system carefully, and I find that it will require 60 divisions to hold each of the present divisional areas. Surely these long thin lines are not worth holding at all if they cannot be properly held,

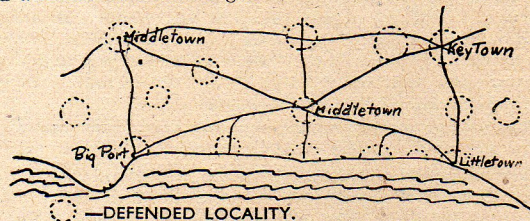
and there are not enough troops in the armies of the world to hold them properly."

This finished the grid system.

What could be found to take its place? The slate was cleaned and people started to think again from the beginning.

Reasoning now went as follows:—Obviously with this new "Area warfare"—no front, flanks or rear—where the enemy can bob up anywhere—it is no longer possible to hold the whole country; great dispersal of force could be the only result of such an attempt.

But there are certain KEY points which MUST be held. Here an important road junction, there a key town where five roads meet. Here a hill which dominates a main line railway and a trunk road. There an important railway junction. Here a group of aerodromes. Obviously all these MUST be held. Let us start then by holding what we must hold and see how far we get.



The above diagram shows the result of this start—small, compact localities dotted about at all strategic points—even replacing the linear system in the very front line—on the beaches.

How had these localities been selected?

It was soon noticed that one factor was common to all of them? Every one was based on the holding and therefore the denying to the enemy of roads, railways and airfields, in short **of all the most rapid means of communication.**

And it soon dawned upon the defence experts that here in itself was the complete answer. Modern armies are dependent upon wheeled transport. If an offensive of any speed is to be maintained it cannot only move across country; it must get the use of good main roads or other similar facilities. If these facilities are denied, the enemy can

"Pincer all he likes"—he will ultimately have to attack and destroy the localities in order to get the use of the roads to push his transport up.

Moreover, here also was the answer to that very nasty problem—the old vulnerable supply echelons so liable to disruption. If in each defended locality or nodal point seven or fourteen days' supply of food, water, ammunition, and petrol were to be dumped, each locality could fight its own independent battle without having to withdraw as soon as the supply life-line had been cut.

That isolated localities such as these can in fact be defended indefinitely against all comers has been proved over and over again in this war—Tobruk, Odessa, Leningrad, the Crimea, to name only a few.

In common with every other nation therefore, we have adopted this system—Defended localities in depth covering all key communications—localities often completely isolated, but wherever possible close enough to give mutual support. Behind all—well back—a large mobile reserve ready to come forward and strike as soon as the real thrust has been identified.

This, then, is the defensive system adopted by us. But what we are considering is the defensive system we may have to attack. How far will the enemy system conform to ours?

We need only here consider three offensive possibilities in attempting to find the answer to this question.

(i.) Enemy invasion and partial penetration—Counter-attacks by us to push him back into the sea. Here the enemy will have captured our own prepared defensive positions. He is very likely to prefer these to any hasty improvisations of his own.

(ii.) Possible raids.—Or

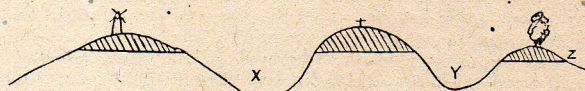
(iii.) Possible major offensives against some part of the European continent. In either case we shall have identical enemy dispositions to contend with, so that the two can be considered together.

The enemy is holding down the entire continent of Europe—an area more than 50 times as great as this island, and a problem more than 50 times as large. He has to defend a very much larger coastline, which we can attack anywhere. He has at the same time to hold down a hostile population and he dare not leave any town or village without a garrison whether there are strategic reasons for holding it or not.

He has all this to do with a force very similar in size at the present moment to our own.

Is it not obvious that his problem of dispersal is a 100 times greater than our own—that he can only hope to hold on to his gains by a system of compact, germanic localities, where he can feel concentrated and safe. These localities must necessarily be much wider apart than our own, and the mobile reserves available must be smaller relatively.

The Offensive again.—Let us now return to consideration of the offensive and look again at the problem of the modern Commander, looking at the same range of hills held by the same enemy.



ORDERS.

Information.—The enemy are NOT holding the line of hills that you see before you (Appreciation—they are probably holding the shaded areas as defended localities because these are of strategic importance).

(NOTE.—A clever officer, armed only with a map and his experience, can work out where the enemy will be and where he will not be, with very fair accuracy by ringing all strategic points—long before he comes to examine the actual ground).

Further information.—Our air recce and our ground recce troops report that the shaded areas are believed to be held by the enemy. Our recce troops, *e.g.*, carriers or armoured cars got through at X, Y, and Z, reaching some low hills beyond.

(NOTE.—(1).—Without air superiority and ground recce there will be NO offensive in this war. They will probably produce some information before the attack is launched).

(2). The battle field is already becoming confused and disordered—our own recce troops are somewhere behind the enemy foremost localities before the action has really started. They have shown us the way through the gaps but they cannot hold ground. They will be in grave danger of destruction if they are not rapidly reinforced).

Intention.—We must **destroy** all enemy at present holding Windmill Hill, Telegraph Hill and Big Tree Hill.

NOTE.—The Commander is not interested in a frontal attack and the capture of GROUND. He knows that this will merely result in the withdrawal of the enemy armies intact. They will simply nip back into similar

defended localities in rear and pile up a **constantly**, stiffening resistance.

He is only interested now in the **DESTRUCTION** of the enemy. This can only be achieved by sewing him up in the bag before the attack—by a policy of flanking movements, or if possible by encirclement.

This policy has dominated German tactics in this war at all stages and has been stated by them again and again).

Method.—Brigade will attack 2 of the 3 localities (note possibly only one locality in an extreme case).

No. 1 Bn. will destroy all enemy on Windmill Hill.

No. 2 Bn. will destroy all enemy on Telegraph Hill.

No. 3 Bn. will follow up reinforcing whichever battalion attack is most successful, then fanning out to attack Big Tree Hill from the rear. (Further orders will be issued for this attack when the first hill has been taken).

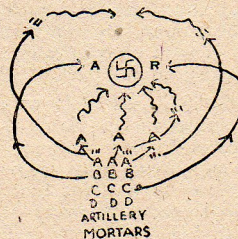
THE BATTALION ATTACK ON AN ISOLATED ENEMY LOCALITY.

Let us now consider the problem of No. 1 Bn. Comdr., imagining in the first instance that Windmill Hill is far enough away from its neighbours to be an isolated post (approx. strength equivalent to one or possibly two British Inf. Coys).

He must **destroy** the enemy. Therefore, he must prevent their withdrawal and prevent the approach of possible mobile reinforcements.

He can only achieve these two objects by attacks from the flanks or rear.

His attack may well, therefore, be much after the following plan :—



Carriers.—Three secs. of carriers deploy. Two Secs. (III III) work round to the rear, one on each flank. **Tasks.** (I) to cut off enemy retreat by putting down a curtain of enfilade fire, (II) to prevent the approach of enemy reinforcements and (III) to protect the flanks of the pincer companies. **Infantry.**

Leading Coy. A.A.A. becomes FIRE company, Moves forward to good fire positions—primary task COVERING FIRE, secondary task to work forward as opportunity permits.

Two companies (BBB and CCC) execute a pincer movement. **Task.**—To assault the enemy, to harass him with fire from all sides (pincers within pincers executed by platoons) and to prevent his escape by possible withdrawal to a flank.

One Company (DDD) in reserve. **Task.**—To reinforce and exploit the success of either "A," "B" or "C" as opportunity offers.

Mortars.—All Coys have Mortar Detachments (one or two) under their command for close support.

Artillery.—Concentration on enemy position during the early stages by observation, whilst the pincers are moving round. Alternative plan—to bring down 5 or 10 minutes heavy concentration at a much later stage—on receipt of a signal (e.g., a very light) calling for this from one or other of the pincer companies.

Timing.—There is no Zero and no start line. Coys. move off as soon as the plan has been carefully explained down to the lowest private soldier. This will take only a few minutes.

Having practiced this form of attack again and again on practice pieces of ground, all ranks know the form and have an idea of the general plan. Co-ordination is achieved by first class team work on the part of all.

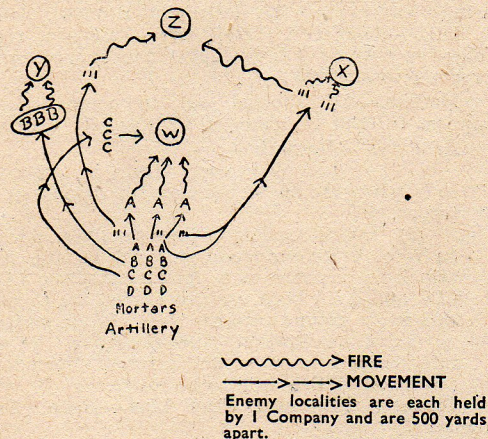
MAXIMUM POSSIBLE SPEED of the Inf. Advance is the aim of all members of the team. Nothing is allowed to interfere with this or to slow it down. The infantry are not held up because supporting arms are not ready or require more time. These arms have learnt that they must evolve a drill which enables them to be ready—the forwards must be fed.

THE BATTALION ATTACK ON A LOCALITY WHICH IS MUTUALLY SUPPORTED BY OTHERS.

NOTE.—The Brigadier at the outset as the result of his information, has selected as his point of attack a place where the enemy defended localities are known to be fairly thin on the ground or fairly wide apart.

If he finds himself confronted by a system of defended localities that is very thick on the ground, and very concentrated that is just the place where he will NOT attack. Such a heavy system can only be built up at the expense of thinning out other or neighbouring posts—it is simple arithmetic that any addition must cause a reduction somewhere. The commander will, therefore, turn aside, seek for the thin spot and make his main attack there. He may as a result get in the first instance what is really flanking or pincer movement by an entire Brigade.

As can be seen in all the German campaigns, similar movements by entire armies are neither impossible nor infrequent).



Principle.—The Bn. Comdr. must first select which of the 4 localities offers the best chance of success and concentrate the whole of his main effort against that locality, isolating it from its neighbours by fire and artificial defilade.

Plan

Carriers. 3 Secs. of Carriers to deploy, 2 secs. (III III), to work round to the rear of the right flank, one sec. to the rear of the left flank.

Tasks.

- (1) To cut off enemy retreat by enfilade fire.
- (2) To protect the flanks of the battalion.
- (3) (Sec. of the left flank only) at the right time and place, to put down smoke across the flank of Y to create an artificial defilade masking the assault of CCC on W.
- (4) Secs. (on the right flank only) to neutralize the fire of X.

Infantry.—AAA—FIRE Company—**primary task**—covering fire on W. **Secondary Task.**—Advance on W as opportunity offers.

BBB—FLANK PROTECTION COMPANY—primary task—to draw and neutralize all fire coming from Y—to beat down the fire of Y—to make Y think he is being attacked—**secondary task**—to protect the flank of CCC.

CCC—MAIN EFFORT COMPANY—primary task—to assault and capture W, destroying all enemy found therein.

DDD—RESERVE COMPANY—Task—to reinforce and follow up AAA or CCC whichever is more successful in making progress towards W.

Mortars.—All allotted out to companies—**task**—close support to each company in its specially allotted role.

Artillery.—Alternatives :—

(1) Fire on W in early stages by observation. Lift to Y when fire on W becomes too dangerous to our own troops, or

(2) Concentration for fixed time (e.g., 5 to 10 minutes) on W or Y (or one troop on each) in later stages of the attack in response to a light signal from CCC or AAA. CCC and AAA both use this agreed fire to work forward and make ground towards their assault positions, or

(3) Concentration throughout on Y with smoke intermingled later as an artificial defilade when the assault at CCC is seen to be ready.

Timings, Zero and Start Line.—None. See previous remarks.

NOTE.—Another possible use would be to put down smoke in the early stages of the battle to mask the move of BBB (FLANK PROTECTION COMPANY) into position.

Next Phase.

"W" having been liquidated the process continues. Again the Battalion Commander pits his maximum force against one locality at a time. "Y" is obviously the next on the list, having already suffered a severe hammering and BBB being already in position to act either as a pincer or as a pivot company according to the ground.

"Z" and "X" follow each in turn, one by one.

Points to Note.

1. The above skeleton plans and orders are diagrammatic; they give an outline which would have to be adapted to the ground.

2. These plans and orders are neither revolutionary nor unorthodox. They are based on the principle that progress can best be made :—

(a) **If the FIRE FIGHT is won.** Fire superiority over the enemy will only be gained by :—

(i) Concentrating the maximum volume of firepower you can spare against a point selected by you.

(ii) Isolating that point from the benefit of cross-fire originating in other mutually supporting localities.

(b) **If SURPRISE is achieved.** This will only be gained by the use of the maximum speed of movement at all times.

3. **FIRE SUPERIORITY AND SURPRISE**, can themselves only be achieved by the closest co-ordination and **TEAM WORK**—fire in the right place at exactly the right time—of all the diverse sub-units which compose the Bn. Gp. Bren Guns, 2-inch Mortars, 3-inch Mortars, Carriers, Artillery and Smoke.

4. This **TEAM WORK** can itself never be achieved without practice. Practice may produce many better team variations and strokes than those briefly outlined above.

5. A drill or code of rules will be essential if order is to come out of chaos. Only by staging a co-ordinated attack again and again, over the same or similar country and by working out every detail of the fire and movement plan can such a drill or code for battle be evolved.

6. Such a drill or code will not impede or obstruct the tactician. It will merely be a very useful addition to his box of tools—perhaps the best tool he has got.

Footnote.

Considerable difference of opinion still exists amongst our military experts as to the desirability of a drill for higher formations.

Yet there is no similar difference of opinion in the German Army. As Para. 23 of A.T.M., No. 41 points out—"A study of tactics employed by the Germans in the Middle East—shows that they have developed a **stereotyped drill**, etc.—"

The Germans have long held the view that the co-ordination of all the complicated weapons of modern warfare—tanks, planes, guns, mortars and infantry—can only be achieved by the use of stereotyped drills. These drills are practised again and again with that scrupulous attention to detail which is so much a part of the German character.

What is our answer to these methods of fighting? We say that our individual brains will beat these drills, that our initiative would only be hampered by the use of them.

We pursue this individuality complex to such an extent that gunners, tanks, airmen, infantry and engineers are all kept in watertight compartments—shrouded in an aloofness which is about as notorious and as impenetrable as our national insularity. These separate branches of the armed forces never meet to plan or to practise together, except on very occasional major exercises.

On the night preceding any such exercise the joint teams compose themselves, and the experts foregather at their respective headquarters—air liaison officers, tanks liaison officers, gunner liaison officers and the like. None of these gentlemen have ever met before, and they do not even talk the same language. If you could see into any of their brains you would find each one thinking—"It is such a pity that old so and so has so poor an idea of the orthodox use of my particular arm. I must let him know somehow that we really can't do that, and we ought to do this."

At last orders are received from above. After long consultations the plan is made. But the execution of the plan and the synchronisation of its subordinate parts is still in the hands of the experts.

Can any amount of originality or brilliance of plan compensate for the inherent defects latent in any such system?

Speed is the essence of surprise. It can never be achieved with safety if half a dozen men who have never worked together before must reach unanimity on timing before action can be taken. Experts asked to give time estimates to total strangers will always add safety margins and these will soon add up to alarming proportions—no one KNOWS how long any particular combined operation will take, so every one plays for safety.

Would not a less brilliant plan, thoroughly understood and practiced in advance by all sub-units, and therefore perfectly synchronized—achieve better results? Can an operation as complicated as a modern combined attack by all arms be ever launched successfully ad hoc? The Dardanelles campaign in the last war will supply the answer.

Is it correct to say that we should use superior mental individuality to rid us completely of "drills?" Should we not be better advised to use that individuality to evolve better and more original drills rather than no drills at all?

The power of brilliant improvisation has always been a great British quality. But that is no reason for relying on it as a cardinal principle of policy. That quality enables us to launch out safely on to organized drills, knowing full well that if anything does go wrong, we have still a surprise up our sleeves—brilliant improvisation. The German with no such second line of defence will find himself out-matched both ways.

"WHAT THE GUNNER WROTE."

Dear Commandant,

I have been thinking over your remarks about "battle drill and higher tactics"—particularly about the "egg box" system.

* You were right when you said that this system of frontal attack with its start lines, creeping barrages, etc., was a legacy of the last war.

I well remember the barrages of those days. The last war was a "Gunner's War"—the whole art of battle then, was to find out if you could manage to concentrate the fire of the whole of the Corps Artillery on to a one battalion front. Why the barrages were often thought out and planned days, or even weeks ahead, and sometimes, in order to preserve secrecy, the infantry weren't told about the proposed offensive until the very evening before it was due to take place.

In other words the gunner plan was made first and the infantry plan merely fitted into it. The infantry were often looked upon as just a lot of "stooges" (an expressive word we hadn't thought of then) who just followed up our shells and later occupied, or failed to occupy, the ground we had blasted or tried to blast.

Ideas like that die hard. A Commanding Officer and a Battery Commander—both probably experienced in the last war—go out together now on a recce. The infantryman turns to the gunner first, asks him perhaps what he can do, and how long he wants to do it in. If the gunner replies "A barrage and give me 1½ hours to be ready," the infantryman thinks this quite natural, and he fits his own plan to conform. And so we get back to those laboured, heavy, frontal attacks where all surprise and speed is lost.

Surely here is a place where we can take a leaf out of the German books. Infantry they say "is the leading arm. All other arms support it." The infantry goes in at all times with the maximum speed, relying on its own skill and its own complete weapons to get it on. We are there to give that infantry the maximum possible support in the quickest possible time—and that is what we must concentrate on learning to do—that and that only. We must never expect or desire the infantry to hold back for us, or to make a plan to suit us. I am quite sure from my own recent experiences, that once we realise that, we can do a wonderful job and beat the infantry to it every time.

Yours sincerely,

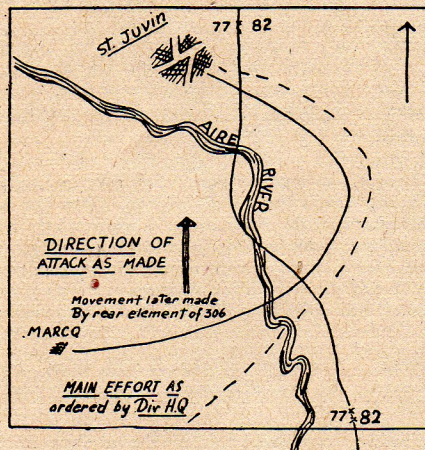
A. B. Smith,

Lt.-Col.

AN EXTRACT FROM THE AMERICAN TEXT BOOK "INFANTRY IN BATTLE."

(The General Alexander referred to here is an American General of the last War).

On October 14, 1918, the U.S. 77th Division attacked the Germans north of the Aire River, near St. Juvin.



The hostile positions in this vicinity were strong, particularly against an attack from the south. Feeling certain that the German barrage and defensive fires were registered south of St. Juvin and the Aire River, the Div. Comdr. planned to take the village by envelopment from the east and south-east, while one regiment made a frontal demonstration from the south. He decided that, under cover of darkness, troops could cross the Aire well to the south unobserved. This operation would require movement in the zone of the 82nd Division on the right, but the position of the 82nd facilitated this manoeuvre. Therefore, the 77th Division order specified:—

By manoeuvring with its right in the area of the 82nd Division, it (the 77th Division) will attack St. Juvin from the south and the east.

Unfortunately, this idea of manoeuvre was not reproduced in the orders of the lower echelons, the troops being sent "straight against St. Juvin from the south," the direction that the Div. Commander had particularly wished to avoid for the real attack.

The 1st Battalion of the 306th Infantry, which the Division Commander had expected to be directed against St. Juvin from the east, attacked straight from the south with the unfordable Aire between it and its objective. The hostile barrage and murderous machine-gun fire from the slopes north of the Aire, swept through the assaulting units in a wave of destruction. The attack stopped. At noon the situation was such that the division commander believed a serious repulse inevitable.

At this time the commanding officer of the 306th Inf. concluded that there was no chance of success if the attack continued along these lines. Therefore, after the failure of the frontal effort, this regimental commander, acting on his own initiative, directed the rear elements of his regiment to cross the Aire east of Marcq and make a flanking movement against St. Juvin. This manoeuvre was carried out, and the town, the hostile position, and 540 prisoners were captured.

—From "Memories of the World War" by Major-General Robert Alexander, who commanded the 77th Division.

(The following comment is by the author of "Inf. in Battle.")

Discussion.—General Alexander emphasises the fact that the attack, as launched at first, was merely frontal. It failed. Not until the regimental commander, acting on his own initiative, ordered troops to cross the Aire and strike the hostile position in flank, was success achieved.

This division commander states that "evidently the malign influence of trench warfare doctrine, which in all cases depended upon a barrage and a straight push behind it, still controlled the minds of some of his subordinates."

THE DIVISIONAL SCHOOL AS THE BRAIN TRUST FOR ALL ARMS IN THE DIVISION.

"AN APPEAL TO UNIT COMMANDERS."

This school has now been running for over four months. During this time we shall have completed eight Inf. Courses, two study weeks in the co-operation of all arms, two Carrier Courses, three Mortar Courses, 12 Field Hygiene and Cookery Courses, a Carrier Mechanics Course and an Intelligence Course—besides catering for large numbers of Home Guards every weekend.

We shall soon have turned out our 1,000th student.

Taking the total numbers of possible students who might have been sent here, it can be said that well over 50 per cent. of the Divisional Officers and N.C.O's have now done a course in their main job—whether that job is infantry fighting, carrier platoon, mortar platoon, or as may be.

The objects of the School, when formed, were fourfold:—

1. To infuse a spirit of life and enthusiasm into training.
2. To foster a real divisional team spirit amongst all arms.
3. To teach a Battle Drill in all subjects—to try to get some of the excellent discipline and method of the parade ground on to the battle field. In other words, to pay the strictest attention to, and if possible to standardize, all those trifling details which collectively make up the soldiers job in battle.

4. To inculcate a Battle Discipline.

We have had a lot of interesting experiences here, and I'm glad to say we have received quite a few bouquets from all sorts of different people. We have had visits from the C.I.G.S., The Army Commander, The Corps Commander, and many other visitors from many parts of England, all of whom have been most enthusiastic. We have had groups of specially selected officers sent in from three other divisions to do our course with the object of forming similar schools in their own divisions. Better still, we have had compliments from officers who have noticed a very great difference in the way our own troops actually perform on the ground.

The success achieved, such as it is, is very largely due to the close co-operation and help we have received from the Brigadiers and Unit Commanders, many of whom have visited the school on numerous occasions, have sent their

best instructors, have offered much valuable advice, and have made many useful suggestions.

At the outset we had a feeling that Battalion Commanders were somewhat diffident about the School and somewhat cautious in their attitude towards it—perhaps very naturally, but as soon as they saw what we were out to do, this attitude rapidly disappeared. Yet great as is the co-operation now existing, it is still not as close as I should like to see it, for reasons which I hope to make clear in this address.

We have tried from the outset to represent the School to everyone in its true light—not as an odious growth foisted on the units from above and swallowed by them as a most disagreeable pill, but as **part** of the units themselves—as an offshoot or branch that they themselves have evolved in response to a real demand.

What is this demand then, and where does it originate?

Here we have to face some unpalatable but undeniable facts.

Whether one looks at the Infantryman we see here, or the Mortar men, or the Carrier men, the Intelligence men, or the Cooks, or I would venture to say—any other department of this or any other division—they know when they arrive here about 50 per cent. of what they **must** know to **equal** the training standards already set by our enemies—and they know even that 50 per cent. very shakily.

And this is after two years of so-called training.

These are undeniable facts. To support them, I have some very interesting statistics prepared in the light of our experience here, which I can produce if there is any disagreement on the matter.

Let us face these facts honestly. It is no use living in fairyland or making excuses for ourselves. Engaged as we are in a life and death struggle, in which our most recent allies during the short period since this School started, have lost in KILLED alone, a number 30 times as great as our entire divisional strength. Now it is fully appreciated that whoever is to blame for these appalling conditions, it is certainly not the Unit Commander, nor indeed anyone else in the Division itself. The Battalion Commander battles manfully on, day in, day out, in his hopeless battle with the powers above. He is compelled to accept the fact that his infantry are only to be regarded as an unskilled labour exchange. Fatigue parties, working parties and every other kind and sort of interference, play havoc with training and make quite sure that all continuity is lost, that the same

ten men are never on parade together at one and the same time, and that everything possible is done to reduce it to complete futility for month after month.

I take full and equal blame with everyone else for these poor achievements. Until fairly recently, I was an Officer Commanding Headquarter Company, responsible for training all specialists. My Commanding Officer gave me all the help in his power. I always had the pick of the men. Hours were spent with him in poring over programmes, working out how these men could be spared now, and those later on.

But it was always the same in the end—we made less than half the headway we needed—because the system defeated us.

We have now looked for a moment at the training which the **Battalion** can give. Let us turn to the other end of the scale, and look at what the **Army** can offer.

The Army runs many excellent courses of instruction, Hythe, Catterick, Netheravon, Matlock—to mention only a few. The standard of instruction at all those schools is very high—so high that there is a very keen demand indeed, amongst Commanding Officers for vacancies. The competition is so keen that sometimes there is considerable heat, and passions are aroused when vacancies are not quite allocated according to plan.

What then is wrong with all these courses. Why not leave them alone to do their job?

What is wrong is that, as in production of tanks and aeroplanes, the army has been thinking in tens when it should have thought in thousands.

The vacancies allotted to any division at Netheravon, for instance, are at the rate of only 1.5 per month. Catterick is much the same. Why, the rate of wastage and loss in specialist platoons is in itself much greater than this. Netheravon men, for example, go off to other jobs and go right out of the Mortar Platoon. Instead of a permanent net gain there is in fact on balance a net loss.

And even the **temporary** gain that a battalion makes from getting one man back from Catterick or Netheravon for a short time, is a very small one. He is a voice crying in the wilderness—one really trained man. He has first, without proper facilities, to start to try to train assistants to train the man who really matters—the private soldier. Probably before he has finished this preliminary, he is whisked away himself to some other job, and the whole value of his course is lost to that battalion for ever.

In short he cannot ever make an IMPACT on training. He is too small a force. When he does get an odd fortnight to get on with the training, he will be drowned by the enormity of his task.

Right. Let us agree that the existing system—the Battalion at the bottom, the Army schools at the top—is not producing the results.

Results are the only things we care about.

Can we, in spite of all our present difficulties, get results some other way?

Yes, I am sure we can.

It is here that I want to put forward the whole idea of this talk—the conception of the Divisional School as a Central Brain Trust—the idea of the Division as the one level at which three essential fundamental principles can be combined:—

1. Thorough and uninterrupted training and opportunity for study amid proper facilities.
2. Co-operation of all arms.
3. Mass production.

Let us consider any of the schools we have just been discussing—Take Netheravon for instance, for we have already experimented on Netheravon lines at this school.

Netheravon is a first-class school in every way, but there is no magic about it. It has certain excellent facilities there, but all of them are open to us—training areas, ammunition, props and the like—in these we can do just as well as anyone else. Moreover we can (indeed, we have) completely and unashamedly stolen all their ideas, their programmes, their methods of instruction. We can and have taken all the benefit of their years and years of experience.

The only difficulty we face (and it is at first sight a big one)—is the finding of instructors equal to theirs. The Army schools all have large numbers of permanent staff instructors who are undoubtedly first rate.

In this department we can only hope to reach their high standard in one way—by all working together in the closest possible harmony, by individual units putting the common good before their own private feeling, in short by making certain that the best possible team **with no exception** and reservation, whatsoever, is put into the field. We have

only one division to draw upon; it is adequate only if there is no holding back by anyone.

Our experience here has already borne this out. We have found in each of the fields we have so far tackled about the same standards.

We have usually proceeded by calling a conference of all officers experienced in the particular subject. This always produces about 15 victims. Amongst these there will be found two outstanding men who know their subject backwards—men with a gift and urge for instruction. Men who have been aching for just such an opportunity as this school can give them.

There are usually too, about three very good men who only need more practice and someone good to learn from and copy in order to become first-class. Then there are about five good men who are adequate, but will never be outstanding. The rest are probably unsuitable for one reason or another.

If the best ten of such a collection are put together and constantly rotated, the very good ones with the less good and so on, I am firmly convinced that we can furnish a standard of instruction on **any** subject that is fully the equal of any school of instruction in the Army.

I will go further. I feel confident that we can surpass those schools. Whilst they tend to rely on a stereotyped programme and must develop in course of time some staleness arising from the "sausage machine" complex, we have harnessed youth, enthusiasm and fanaticism—the greatest driving force in the world. Moreover the school is large enough without being too large. A good many of the students know each other before they come here—there is an intimate, almost a homely DIVISIONAL spirit which does one's heart good.

The pupils too behave quite normally here. At the famous Army Schools they are too awed or too cowed to dare to use their brains to think out suggestions. They have come only TO BE TOLD.

Here they are not in the least afraid of anybody. If they have an idea, they produce it fearlessly. As a result many quite valuable and helpful new ideas have already been produced here—ideas small in themselves, but of great cumulative value.

You have already seen some of those ideas on our Study Week. Now I hope that you will agree with me when I say that our "ersatz" Netheravon is in every respect at least

equal to the real thing. But I don't ask you to take this from me. If you want to know, I ask you to question the students themselves and to abide by their verdict.

I have gone somewhat long-windedly into this matter because I felt that it is not understood. To give an example of a very recent experience of mine here. I asked a certain Adjutant whether his C.O. could oblige by making an instructor available for another course. He replied "Well I think he'll be rather sore about it. But he is very anxious to get a Netheravon vacancy for an officer. I feel sure that if you could manage that for us he would certainly agree." I felt that this was a little hard, when we had just, in effect given him not one, but twelve Netheravon vacancies.

This business of the instructors and their release to the school goes to the whole root of our problem here. May I state my case on it and hope that you will see it in the same light as I do. These remarks apply to all our courses.

X Battalion are asked to invest Smith, their best instructor, their star unspareable man, in the school for three months. Loss—Smith for three months.

What is the dividend they receive in return?

1. Say 40 students trained during the period—sufficient to have a real MASS effect on the Battalion training.

2. Smith himself back, not the Smith he was, but enormously enriched by three months life—eating, drinking and sleeping his subject, making contact with others who are interested in it, making contact with others who specialize in other subjects.

Of course he will probably develop a few faults too—he may be a bit more bumptious than he was. But it will be the bumptiousness that goes with knowledge.

I put it to you, that bearing in mind the hours Smith would have to waste in his unit through lack of interruptions or lack of facilities, any battalion is enormously the gainer over this profit and loss account. Look at it from a purely selfish point of view, and no other. Smith could never have trained those 40 officers and N.C.Os. in his own unit on his own. He has neither the opportunity nor the facilities.

Instead of having only 80 men 50% trained, the unit has in addition 40 men 100% trained.

Many units, I know, realize all I have said fully, and agree with it, but the degree of realism is not uniform. Some units are so keen on these realization ideas themselves that

they ring up the School and eagerly press us to take on their best instructors because they feel that they are not getting enough scope to teach in the unit. Other units when asked for a star man, are loathe to part with him because of the valuable work he is doing within the unit, and they do not weigh up the balance sheet in the way I have mentioned. They are taking what the school offers, but are not giving correspondingly in return.

Is it any wonder that we feel inclined sometimes (though not often) to take the least line of resistance and to accept what is freely and easily offered, possibly not getting the best?

Yet for reasons already given in the purely selfish interests of your own unit, having regard to the large number of students you will send as pupils, you cannot afford NOT to have your very best instructors at this school.

By the further exploitation of this system we can at last achieve what we have all been striving for—a nucleus of Officers and N.C.Os. who really know their job backwards, and who are all teed up to teach it every time they get the opportunity; a nucleus moreover which is large enough, and numerous enough, to withstand that eternal wastage to which we are all so subject.

I firmly believe that we can together establish a school which would by comparison make the present establishment look like a humble kindergarten. There is no reason at all why we shouldn't produce our own Catterick for instance, or our own Hythe or own Matlock or run our own range-finder courses, or anything else you desire. They can all be done with a little co-operation from you, if you wish it.

More, by our present policy of running courses attended by all arms, we can begin to get a **team spirit** far outside the infantry. This is growing every day as you can see if you come to the school. Suggestions have already been made by many officers who have attended this school that we should run special "co-operation" courses here, to be attended by Infantry, Gunners, Tanks and even by R.A.F., at which all mutual problems will be studied and **practised**. These suggestions have been very well received by all the supporting arms who are very anxious to take part.

All our courses here will in no way supplant the Army Schools. There is no reason at all why a student should not go straight from one of our Mortar Courses (for instance) to Netheravon the day he leaves here and *vice versa*. It would be the best thing in the world for him.

He will get 8 weeks of good instruction instead of only 4. He could very easily do with another eight and still be short of experience.

Nor need the course in any way supplant the Battalion Commander in any of his functions. The most we can ever hope to do here is to help the Commanding Officer to train a large proportion of his Officers and N.C.Os. in some subjects. The passing on of the knowledge to the private soldier still remains to be done. The training of the orchestra as a whole still remains to be done—surely a big enough task in itself.

This Division has already been a pioneer in this new movement. It has managed, with your help, to achieve much in 4 months. Given your further co-operation and backing along the path already outlined and I am sure that we can reach a standard of efficiency in every branch of training 100% higher than anything that could possibly be achieved by older methods.

That is the case I wish to put to you.

THE RIGHT MAN IN THE RIGHT JOB.

How true are these thoughts?

Sondern in his article on the German Army (which is quoted as the opening chapter of this book) draws attention not only to the new kind of men required to work this new kind of army, but to the great modern organization which Hitler has built up to find these men—to dig them out of the ruck—his “**Bureau of Personnel.**”

This is the channel along which we have made least progress since the war began. Whatever the public may think and the press may say, the army is still very far from being a career in which talent, ability, imagination and hard work are all that is required to get on.

Take any two Battalions in the same Division. In one the C.O., through a series of misfortunes, may lose his four best Company Commanders in as many weeks. He knows he has nobody really good enough to take their place; but as a matter of course he promotes the best he has. In the very next Battalion, possibly, while there are no vacancies, perhaps 10 officers are really outstanding—well worthy of the promotion they will not receive.

The Battalion is much too small a unit—too prone to be subject to personalities, favouritism, seniority squabbles and other irrelevancies. Much sulking and heartburning will result if “X” a lively youngster is moved up over the heads of “A” and “B” (who after all really have nothing against them have they?)—so the least line of resistance is taken every time. In the case of regular officers their own personal careers and their ranking on the regimental list are still regarded as relevant factors when promotion is under consideration.

And so it goes with the staff. Junior appointments are often haphazard—someone who knows someone who isn't a bad fellow. **Never** is there any attempt at scientific and methodical selection of the best possible man for the job. Yet once with a foot firmly planted on the bottom of the Staff ladder, this junior officer, will in due course go to the Staff College and progress in course of time gradually upwards to an important job, carrying his mediocrity with him wherever he goes.

What is expected of the staff officer? Should he possess creative ability, drive and initiative? Should he be expected to think? Should he be thinking every hour of every day “How can I improve this organization?” Or should he

be a man who accepts the system as he finds it—as something so immutable and perfect that he must never even think of attempting to alter or improve it?

All that now seems to be **expected** of a staff officer is that he should be pleasant and easy to work with—good at keeping papers in order, good at copying out orders from above and passing them on. He is merely a third grade civil servant in some cases carrying no responsibility. He is rarely expected to think or to produce ideas. The conception of the staff is—a civil service. It ought to be a brain trust.

A commander of whatever rank is a very busy man. He has to attend to many duties other than creative thinking. The attitude of so many staff officers at present is one of respectful attention to "the oracle." They are "yes" men.

What we must find is the type of man who feels that his only real task is to put something creative into the hat every day.

Is it not perhaps a fact that many present holders of staff appointments have psychologically developed along the lines of the impeccable civil servant rather than the implacable war-maker?

Passing for a moment back to the very bottom of the ladder to the private soldier, the same system is at work. From the very day he joins the army, the army's attitude to him is "you have come to be told. We are going to take the wind out of you my boy." He is encouraged not to think, not to use his brains, but to wait about for orders on all occasions. Our greatest national asset—our ability to think for ourselves—our ability to produce ideas—is deliberately repressed.

What is needed?

A Bureau of Personnel with a ruthless Personnel Officer attached to each division or brigade. These men would be expert talent scouts—men skilled in picking men. Every officer in every division would be scientifically card-indexed with all his qualities and failings, his history and achievements recorded. The Personnel Officer would make it his business to **know** all these officers personally, and to know all about them.

When vacancies occurred for promotion in battalions, or for staff jobs, the Personnel Branch would be able to recom-

mend the best man for the job—or a selection of best men to be considered and combed out by further test if necessary.

Only one yardstick would be used—ability.

Such a Personnel Branch could be built up very quickly if the building of it were done on modern and realistic lines. Most large businesses owe all their success to the use of such a system. They realise that when they have found the right men, the business can be left to run itself.

It is a mistake to assume that modern ideas like these can't be applied to the army because, by tradition, officers will resent being moved from one regiment to another. This assumption is incorrect. Officers could just as easily cultivate a larger divisional or national loyalty as a smaller regimental loyalty—at any rate neither the German Army, nor the U.S. Army, nor our own Navy, finds any difficulty in doing so. It is all a question of habit.

Can we change our habits? Should we try to swap any of our horses crossing this flood?

One has only to read Sondern's study of the German Army to find the answer to these questions.

We are fighting the most powerful organization in the world—a perfectly co-ordinated team which is making the best possible use of every available man. No mere system of co-operative training—no battle drill—however adequate can find an answer to it unless the very best possible men **we** can find, are put into the right places in our team before ever our training starts.

That is the place of these remarks in this book.

We have the best men—we need them—in the right place.

"THE RIGHT MAN IN THE RIGHT JOB, AS AMERICA SEES IT."

Frederic Sondern's Campaign first outlined in the article reproduced at the beginning of this book has had much success in America as the following reprint shows:—

After months of experiments, the personnel system of the United States Army—which places the new soldier where he can work most efficiently—is fast becoming the world's best. For the first time in our army's history this classification of man-power is made scientifically and thoroughly; the achievement of a determined few in the War Department who, under pressure of Europe's lessons, overcame older officers' resistance to change.

Under this system a commander who needs a parachute mechanic, a blaster and powderman, a meteorologist, or an aerial photographer, can get qualified men as easily as the executive of a big corporation can get stenographers or accountants. This system developed with the help of the country's outstanding personnel experts, will save the terrible misuse of men of special abilities which so decreased our efficiency in the last war.

The classification of the raw draftee begins at his Reception Centre, where he is given the General Classification Test, a compact written intelligence examination which lasts about an hour. Its various tests of perception, ingenuity, power of analysis, and general knowledge run from simple questions up to difficult ones that even college graduates find hard to answer. Typically 13 per cent of draftees make Grade I—"superior, officer material"; 40 per cent get Grade II—"superior, non-commissioned officer material"; 27 per cent are placed in Grade III—"average"; 13 per cent in Grade IV—"inferior"; and 7 per cent in Grade V—"very inferior, for observation, special assignment, or discharge." That is a showing the German Army would envy.

After this basic examination the draftee confers with a "classification interviewer," who fills in his soldier Qualification Card. This is an elaborate record which will follow him throughout his military career. On to it go details of his education, knowledge of languages, former occupations, particulars of any position where he had authority over other men, his hobbies, musical or theatrical talents, previous military training. If the interviewer is not satisfied that the

man who claims to be an expert photographer or a tool-maker is really qualified, he gives him the appropriate Trade Test, an ingenious examination which the War Department has compiled for almost every speciality.

After the interviewer has done his job, the Qualification Card goes to the Classification Officer—a man trained in personnel work. John Smith, it appears, has graduated from law school; but the Army has plenty of lawyers. He had also once been employed as a teletype operator. The Classification Officer therefore marks on Smith's card a recommendation that he be sent to the Signal Corps.

Edward Jones was chief usher in a movie palace. There is nothing there to mark him for one of the 290 military specialities—ranging from "automobile mechanic, Diesel" and Installer-Repairman, Telephone and Telegraph to laundry foreman, riveter, X-ray photographer. His superior grade in the General Qualification Test, and the fact that he supervised 30 ushers under him, mark him as a potential non-commissioned officer. Jim Johnson, next in line, was a construction foreman—and in his spare time a pigeon fancier: He will do either for the Signal Corps pigeon unit or the Engineer Corps. The alternatives are marked on his card, with his preference.

The Cards now go to the Assignment Officer. Fort Monmouth, let us say, has put in a request for telegraph and teletype operators. Fort Knox, Replacement Centre of the Armoured Corps, wants "basic material" of the unusual intelligence required by the "tankers." The Assignment Officer puts the Classification Cards, which have along their edges 142 numbered holes, each corresponding to a certain qualification into his sorting machine and sets it to pick out the categories of the men desired. As the cards go through the machine, Smith's drops out as a teletype operator's. Jones's as "basic material" of exceptional quality. Johnson's as a construction foreman's. Within 24 hours each is on his way to the Replacement Centre that wants him.

At the Replacement Centre the draftee goes through another thorough weeding-out. During the 13 weeks in which he learns how to drill, shoot and take care of himself, **he is continually under the eye of a unit personnel officer.** If listed as a specialist he is given the chance to show that he really possesses the qualifications.

For example, "basic material" Edward Jones, the ex-movie usher is found to have the sense of split-second

timing and other characteristic knacks which mark the potential tank driver. He does well on his Mechanical Aptitude Test—the same examination applied by most big manufacturing concerns to their candidates for Machinists' training. He is put into the Tank School, where he learns the mechanical intricacies of the Diesel engine, passes the examinations for stereoscopic vision, balance, quick reaction and other necessary qualifications—which are almost as strict as those for the Air Corps. His officers give him the stringent thrice-over which makes the Armoured Corps harder to enter than Nazi Panzer Division. As a result he becomes a tank driver and is sent to an active combat unit.

In the Signal Corps at Fort Monmouth the draftee may learn to be a telephone lineman, a motion picture technician a draftsman, or a teletype operator. At Fort Knox he can become an expert in motor cycles, a telegrapher or a wizard at overhauling a complicated tank. The Army teaches more thoroughly and quickly than the average technical school. "We're no miracle-workers," an instructor at Knox remarked to me, "we just have unusual material to teach."

When the soldier goes to his permanent station, his Qualification Card, augmented by the "remarks" of his officer at the Replacement Centre, goes with him. **The commanders study it carefully**—to pick the soldiers who will fill the non-commissioned ratings, the back-bone of any unit, and to have a complete inventory of the special abilities under their command. A telegrapher who is fluent in Russian may not have caused much comment at the Signal Corp School in New Jersey, but he is of vital importance in Alaska. Radio operators proficient in Spanish are in great demand at our Caribbean bases. A man experienced as an athletic director, or a musician with a talent for organizing orchestras, can spell much difference in the morale of an isolated post.

The mass of the draftees drop into the "basic" category—useful for anything not too complicated. They become members of rifle companies, anti-aircraft batteries or artillery units. But among these, also, the process of selection goes on. While the man who shoves shells into an anti-aircraft gun, need have no special aptitude, the soldier who works the height finder or the predictor that aims the gun must have very rapid visual perception. The anti-tank gunner must be able to sit quietly at his piece in the face of a roaring, clanking tank attack and wait until his terrifying enemy is within easy range. That takes a special kind of man.

The noncom in charge of the modern infantry squad—with its automatic weapons and rapidity of independent movement—must be a more intelligent tactician than his predecessor of 1917.

There is only one method of finding the anti-tank gunner and the noncom who will automatically do the right thing—and that is by actual trial at realistic manoeuvres like the recent war games in the South and the huge autumn exercises, the first we have ever held with two complete armies. During such tests, many thousands of men are picked by their officers as having that extra performance which, to the trained eye, signifies leadership.

If Edward Jones, the movie usher, who has by now proved himself an exceptional tank driver and been promoted to sergeant, shows his commander that he understands the tactics of armoured combat and that his qualities of leadership are adapted to military tasks, he will be given a chance to try for an Officers' Training School.

Examinations for this are exhaustive; they test his entire military knowledge, pry into his whole personal life, his family background, his tastes, general information and opinions. Edward Jones becomes a lieutenant the hard way. And he's good. He has to be.

With present officers, the War Department's Personnel System has a vast job ahead. Up to a few months hardly any attention was paid to an officer's special aptitudes. **Now 160,000 officers are being classified for their past service, experience and specialties.** On the basis of this checkup, thousands of officers, particularly those who have come in recently from the National Guard and Reserves, will be switched into the jobs that their experience best fits them for. If this organization is built up as methodically and efficiently as the other, we shall be well on the road to an army which will have the man-power far superior in quality to that of the Nazi war-lord.

THE PLACE OF THE INFANTRYMAN IN THE SYMPHONY OF WAR.

This book started with an extract from an article by a famous American observer who long watched events in Germany.

Let us close it with a similar extract. William Schire in his recent book "Berlin Diary" said (about the German Army):—

"The great gulf between officers and men is gone in this war. The German Officer no longer represents—a class or caste. All the men in the ranks feel this. They feel like members of one great family."

In short the Reichswehr—Holy of holies of Military tradition, formality and diehardism, has deliberately cast all these things aside in the interests of better war-making.

Hard indeed must it be for us to learn such lessons as co-operation and team work from a nation of sportsmen as rotten as the Huns. But facts must be faced. They are making us look third rate in war just as they did in the Olympic Games, not because their individual man is better than ours, but because their system of selecting the men, of training them to produce the team, and their understanding of the sort of team that is needed to win—is so much better than ours.

We are still far behind in these fields. We have at last realised that to win this war, Bren Guns, 3-inch Mortars, Tanks, Planes and Guns are necessary. But have we realised that MEN are necessary—men with the knowledge and skill to co-ordinate the use of all these intricate weapons?

Tanks, Planes and Guns, and the men who work them, have certainly contributed in no small measure to the German Victories. But it is always overlooked that the infantry have played just as big a part in the game—highly trained, methodically practised, skilled fighting men—always nipping in with that little extra effort at the right place, and at the right time.

The individual infantryman of to-day to do his job well must be a star individual performer. He will never develop his skill if he is to be regarded as a casual labourer who can learn all there is to know about the job in a few weeks of so-called training.

The individual Infantryman of Britain has all the talents. He could easily become that star performer. But he will never do so if he is expected to play an intricate piece of

Brahms as the leading soloist in a large orchestra whose other members he is never allowed to know or see.

To play that intricate piece well, he must have practice—regular, methodical practice. He must have that practice ultimately not alone, but surrounded by his supporting colleagues all working together as members of one great harmonious band.

He must have Battle Drill.

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- B. Training Programme—The School of Battle Drill.
- C. Vocabulary of Battle Drill.

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HOW GERMANS TREAT THEIR WAR PRISONERS

By

Political Instructor Yezersky, Red Army.
(from Official Soviet Sources).

I was wounded in battle and taken prisoner by the Germans. They threw me into a concentration camp near the village of Golovanevskoye, where I spent three weeks. Together with me were many other prisoners, mostly inhabitants of the occupied districts and Red Army men.

We were given nothing to eat or drink in the first four days. Only on the fifth day we received two tablespoonfuls of filthy liquid, cooked from concentrated food and mixed with kerosene. From 30 to 40 people died daily from this horrible food. There was no medical aid of any description and people simply rotted to death.

The wounded removed worms from their wounds with spoons. One of the prisoners, Nurse Nina Fastovets, asked the prison commandant for some bandages to dress the men's wounds. She was brutally beaten with sticks until she lost consciousness.

One old civil physician, whose name I can't recall, tried to help the wounded as best he could. Learning of this, the commandant summoned him to the courtyard and began beating him with a stick. "Dance, you dirty Russian," ordered the commandant, continuing to strike the 62-year-old man. The doctor refused to obey the order, but after being severely beaten did begin to dance. After that he was forced to stand all day under a scorching sun.

The local population tried to help us in every way. Fruit, jars of honey and other food was thrown to us over the barbed wire, but all this food was picked up by the Germans. In the darkness of night we made bandages with our shirts and dressed our wounds.

"Uman Hole."

After 19 days I was transferred to another camp. I cast a last glance on my comrades and noted the numerous graves around the camp. Not many of us had survived. We were marched to the new camp at terrific speed; all laggards were shot down immediately. On the road the Nazis thought of some amusement; one of them would order us to line up in fours, others in sixes—and naturally this resulted in confusion. This gave the Nazis the pretext to open fire

on us for insubordination. In our 24 hours march to Uman, 64 of my comrades were killed in this way.

The concentration camp at Uman was even worse. It is known in the occupied areas of the Ukraine as "Uman Hole." We were driven into a huge clay quarry about 300 metres in diameter. Its walls of about 15 metres in height were guarded by a strong convoy which opened fire from automatics as soon as any movement began in the pit.

Here were several thousand prisoners—Red Army men and civilians and many railway workers from the Akkerman district. All orders were given by loudspeakers. Every morning a loudspeaker ordered one group to line up at Wall No. 1, another at Wall No. 2, etc. Wall No. 2 often meant certain death, for all men lined up at it were shot without any pretext.

Food conditions were even worse than in Golovanevskoye. Our dead, most of whom fell from hunger, were buried on the spot. There were so many of them that we couldn't dig graves fast enough. In order to get some warmth, some of us dug holes in the walls with our hands. Once this led to the wall caving in and burying 36 people under it.

One day the Nazis threw a wounded horse to the hungry crowd in the pit. When we began to cut it cameramen appeared at the top and recorded the whole incident in a film. One cameraman wasn't satisfied with the picture as too many people had been grouped around the horse. The German soldier helped him by shooting down several with an automatic rifle.

The same cameraman staged the spectacle of "Hitler Charity" in the pit. Among us was Sen. Lieut. Novikov, who had eleven wounds. Novikov had no clothes at all and the Germans made him stand before the camera while they bandaged his wounds and put on a clean shirt. As soon as the cameraman had finished his work they removed the shirt, tore off the bandages and brutally beat him up.

The Nazis had yet another favourite pastime; they would lower dogs into the pit and set them on us. Many prisoners were savagely bitten. Another method of torture was to make a prisoner lie flat on the ground while a whole pail of water was forced into him through a funnel.

From Uman I was marched to Camp No. 183 in Vinitsa. At Gaisino, stopping point on the way prisoners were beaten up with rubber truncheons instead of with the customary rods. It was at Gaisino that I succeeded in escaping. When

I reached the nearest village and told the peasants that I had escaped from Uman Hole they looked at me as if I was resurrected from the dead.

They were very helpful in providing me with clothes and food and showed me the way. Moving across occupied country I saw everywhere the same picture. At Byelaya Tserkov, I saw the looted homes and a mother with an infant in her arms put to death with a bayonet. Everywhere was blood and the corpses of defenceless women, children and old people. In the village of Kamenichi, I saw the charred body of a woman who was burnt alive because her husband served with the Red Army. In the village of Sosnitsi the corpse of the collective farm chairman was still hanging from a tree. He had been killed many days ago, but the Germans forbade the population to remove the corpse.

Over six weeks I spent as a German prisoner. Before I simply would have refused to believe that such savagery as the Nazis practice on the Soviet people was at all possible. But I saw it with my own eyes and was myself subjected to it.

October, 1941.

THE SCHOOL OF BATTLE DRILL.

Training Programme.

- Sun. 1800 hrs. Lecture—Commandant—Why you are here.
 Mon. 0900 hrs. Opening Lecture by Div. Comd.
 1000 hrs. Lecture—Fieldcraft.
 1050 hrs. Movement with and without arms
 Demonstration and practice).
 1140 hrs. Individual Stalk.
 1215 hrs. Observation Training I—Inanimate Objects
 1245 hrs. Crawling under fire.
 1415 hrs. Demonstration—Use of Cover—Practice.
 1505 hrs. Individual Stalk—Capturing Flags.
 1600 hrs. Observation Training II—Animate Objects.
 Tues. 0900 hrs. Lecture—Further Points on Fieldcraft.
 0930 hrs. Selection of lines of advance and Sec.
 stalks.
 1415 hrs. Demonstration—Use of Scouts.
 Mutual
 Games—Grandmother's footsteps and stalk-
 ing a blindfold man.
 Wed. 0900 hrs. Lecture—Battle Drill for Infiltration.
 0930 hrs. Demonstration—Section coming under fire
 and attempting infiltration.
 (a) The Untrained Section.
 (b) The Section Trained.
 1000 hrs. Demonstration — Infiltration — Parade
 Ground Drill.
 1015 hrs. Practice by squads.
 1415 hrs. Lecture—The Pincer Movement.
 Squads Practice.
 1600 hrs. Exercise—A Section dealing with attempted
 enemy infiltration from many directions.
 Thurs. A.M. Platoon following a retreating enemy (One
 Pl.—0830).
 P.M. Night Patrol Drill. Lecture and Practice.
 Night Reconnaissance Patrol.

No. 7 Platoon.

- Fri. A.M. Village fighting. Lecture.
 demonstration and
 practice.
 P.M. Action of a Pl. across
 country against un-
 located enemy.

No. 8 Platoon.

- Lecture & T.E.W.T.
 Defence in Mobile
 Warfare.
 Village fighting.
 Demonstration and
 practice.

- Sat. A.M. Lecture and T.E.W.T. Action of a Pl. across
 Def. in mobile war- country against
 fare. unlocated enemy.
 Mon. A.M. Wood fighting. Scheme—The ap-
 proach and storm-
 ing of East Masc-
 alls.
 P.M. Tank Traps and Road Lecture & T.E.W.T.
 blocks.
 Dusk to
 Night. Pursuing tanks into night harbour and destroy-
 ing them by night.
 Tues. A.M. Scheme — The approach Wood fighting.
 and storming of East
 Mascalls.
 Crossing a defended river Guarding a Bridge
 and the use of Assault or V.P. and pre-
 and Recce boats. Lec- cautions against
 ture, demonstration sabotage. Lecture
 and Practice. and T.E.W.T.
 (Covering fire—live).
 Wed. A.M. Crossing a defended river Guarding a Bridge
 and the use of Assault or V.P. and pre-
 and Recce boats. Lec- cautions against
 ture, Demonstration sabotage. Lecture
 and practice. and T.E.W.T.
 P.M. Intercepting Airborne Troops making for a V.P.
 Thurs. A.M. Exercise with live fire—The Killing Power of
 a Pl.
 P.M. Defending a river or a canal line and counter-
 attacking.
 Lecture and T.E.W.T.
 Night. Fighting patrol including night river crossing.
 Fri. all day. Hunting Parachute Troops "up hill and down
 dale."
 Sat. A.M. A.A.—Latest ideas in defence, offence, and
 aircraft recognition.
 The tactical picture on which Battle Drill
 is based—Lecture by the Commandant.
 Divisional Commander's closing talk.

BATTLE DRILL JARGON.

"Sweat Saves Blood"	Going further to get into good cover will mean sweat but will save blood.
"Cover from view is not cover from fire, if you have been seen getting there."	Hedges, etc., give cover from view but NOT necessarily from fire.
"Fieldcraft is offensive"	Use it NOT for cover, but to get nearer and nearer the enemy who you are going to kill.
"Offensive Defence"	The use of the mobile fire unit in the plan of defence.
"Get Cracking"	Move off at the double.
"Winkle"	Worm forward on your belly.
"Shambolics"	A complete shambles in a scheme.
"Point Section"	Leading Sec. of an advancing Platoon.
"Fire Section"	The first sec. to come under fire (point sec.) who will engage the enemy in a fire fight.
"Left (Right) Flanking Sec."	A Section which does an enveloping movement to the left (or right) of an enemy post.
"Rifle Group"	All the riflemen in the section.
"Bren Group"	No. 1 and 2 of Bren Gun and 2 I/C of Sec.
"Smoke Man"	The man in the sec. who carries smoke.
"Bomber"	A man in the Sec. who carries Grenades.

"Stops"	Bren Guns covering the enemy's line of retreat who will kill him when he does withdraw.
"One leg on the ground"	Either the Bren Group or the Rifle Group must be on the ground giving covering fire when the other is moving.
"Drop your Bren (Rifle)"	Put the group in a firing position to cover the other groups' advance over open ground.
"Legs"	The distance between enemy posts to be covered by the advancing Platoon.
"Beaters"	A line of men used to search a wood.
"Support Groups"	Groups of men who work in conjunction with the beaters to kill Germans.
"Mobile Reserve"	A group of men on a Platoon truck to pursue and kill escaping Germans.
"Mobile Fire Unit"	A unit detailed in defence to go out and kill enemy in his "forming up" area or on his recce, etc.,
"Killing ground"	Picked area on which enemy is to be killed.
"Flank Protection Pl."	The Pl. in the Coy. attack which will neutralize a post which is mutually supporting the one picked to be attacked and thus protect the flank of the main effort Platoon.

- "Main Effort Platoon " A Platoon in the Coy. attack
which will put in the real
attack on a mutually de-
fended enemy post.
- "Mutually defended " Posts so sighted they can by
cross fire mutually support
each other.
- "All round Observation " Each man detailed to look in a
(Sec. and Pl., etc.). definite direction.





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